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. A. FLITTING. W.J.M.

A HOUSE TO LET.

BY MRS. MOLESWORTH.

CHAPTER I.

A FLITTING.

SOMETHING was going to happen at No. 9. That was clear. The children behind the bars of the high-up nursery windows across the street could have told the most, I dare say. For one or two of them had had colds and had not been allowed to go out for a week or so, and their best amusement had been to watch the doings of their opposite neighbours. They could have told you how

the old lady and gentleman had made two or three short journeys this winter, in spite of the cold, staying away a night or so only, they who for more years than the children certainly could remember had made but one annual flitting to the seaside every autumn. And now when a couple of cabs, so loaded with luggage inside and out that the old gentleman's valet and the old lady's maid could scarcely find room in either, had driven away from the door from which a moment before the neat brougham had started with the old people themselves, the children knew all about it.

"They've left for good now," said Bessie,

who being a girl, of course jumped to conclusions much quicker than Jack, who though he was older and bigger, laboured, poor fellow, under the disadvantage of being only a boy. It wasn't exactly his fault to be sure; still he was never allowed to forget it, for there were three sisters "on the top of him,"

as Bessie said, and the two brothers who came "behind her" were two small to be good for much in the way of backing him up. He was really "Jack in the middle," but long ago it had been decided in this family that there were to be *two* "Jacks in the middle," even though it put it all rather crooked. For Bessie and he were so much nearer each other in age than they were near the big sisters on the one hand, or the little brothers on the other, that it would have been absurd to "count ourselves any other way," said all of them. And the arrangement was

very well carried out. Jack and Bessie kept together faithfully. They did everything together, even to getting into long division and having the measles. And this winter they had got bad colds together, which was rather a good plan, as they could stay in the same room, and have the same

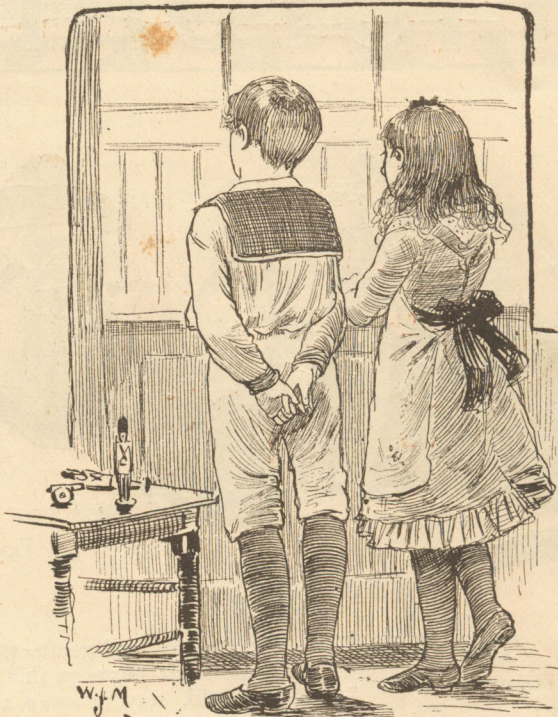
hot gruel at night and the same medicine marked "three times a day." They were sensible children, you see. I call it very sensible to have chosen the very time for their bad colds when there was a removal going on at No. 9 opposite.

For that was the meaning of the unusual journeys and general excitement, as Bessie had guessed.

"They've left for good now," she said. "Poor old lady and gentleman. It makes me rather sad, doesn't it you, Jack, to think we'll never see them again? In a day or two, you'll see, there'll come two or three great big vans and a lot of men, and all the furniture'll be carried out and packed into the vans and there'll be 'A house to let' opposite, Jack."

Jack listened admiringly. Bessie was only seven and he was eight and a half. He felt that she was far forwarder for her age than he. But he was a nice

boy—he didn't feel jealous—it was only fair for girls to have *something* better than boys, for it must be very sad never to be able to look forward to having Eton jackets and trousers, or boots with nails in, or football flannels like their big cousin D'Arcy. From which you will see that all the whole-



"They've LEFT FOR GOOD NOW"

some snubbing of Flora and Pleasance and Agnes had fallen on rather stony ground—Jack wouldn't have *not* been a boy, not for—oh, I can't find any strong enough words to say for it!

"I hope it won't be 'a house to let' for long," he replied. "Can't you guess about that too, Bessie? I should like new people to come at once, while we're not doing lessons. It would be fun to see the furniture all going in, and to watch to see what they were like."

But Bessie wasn't enough of a gipsy to predict any more. She was right enough so far—the big vans came and the furniture was all carried out and the street was left very messy-looking in front of No. 9 for a day or two, with bits of straw and paper and ends of string fluttering about. The last person to come out was the old gentleman and lady's old cook, who had stayed behind to see that all was right. She wasn't going to be their cook any more, for she was getting too old. And she wiped her eyes rather sadly as she shut-to the area gate for the last time, and out of the covered basket which she carried on her arm there came a plaintive mew of sympathy, for the old cook was taking the old lady's old cat away with her.

"She'll be company for you," the old lady had said kindly, "and she'd never take to country ways. You must bring her to see us when you come to spend a day though."

For the old gentleman and lady had taken a house some way out of town. They were getting too stiff for London stairs, they said, and they wanted a garden to stroll about in.



Jack and Bessie had not been the only —people I was going to say, but that would not do—*ones* I'll say for the present, to watch with interest the signs of a removal from No. 9. There was a whole family even more interested in it than the two children opposite.

And on the evening of the day which saw the departure of the old cook and the old cat, the excitement of this family reached its height.

"It's true, it's all true—our best hopes are fulfilled. Ah my poor heart! It is palpitating with emotion. I shall never again be the— the mouse I was, I fear, my beloved Mrs. Bright-eyes. What I have gone through of

late since our little ones have been old enough to run about alone, no one knows."

And Mr. Bright-eyes smoothed his ruffled fur with his paws—for a mouse's fur *can* be rubbed the wrong way, though you mightn't think it—and looked up to his plump little wife for sympathy.

"My poor dear," she said feelingly, "I can't bear to think of it. But you speak of good news—can it be—is it possible that the—the unmentionable one—is gone? Has she over-eaten herself—has her hideous voice at last worn out some neighbour's patience? Why if *I* were a human being

looked round and said 'So it's good-bye to the old place at last for you and me, pussy.' At which *she*, the nameless one, mewled. 'And even for your sake, pussy,' continued the deluded creature, 'I cannot hope for mice in our new home. For they are the most destructivest and forageousist pests as never was. They may have it all their own way here now howsomenever for all I cares.' And with that she shut the door, sending my

poor heart pit-a-pat, and I darted home to tell you. But the emotion is too much for me. Have you a morsel of something at hand? I could—

I think I could swallow a



MR. & MRS. BRIGHT-EYES

I would not have endured her a single night! But alas! *such* good news is not to be hoped for."

"I beg your pardon, my love. Our fiendish enemy, the enemy of our race, is, I may take upon myself to say, still in the land of the living, but she will never trouble *us* more. I have just from a hole in the kitchen cupboard watched her departure—her final departure, Mrs. Bright-eyes, in a basket on the cook's arm. And as they left the kitchen, cook

crumb of sponge-cake—there was some at afternoon-tea as usual, I suppose? 'Twas you who were in the drawing-room yesterday."

"You forget, my love—there has been no sponge-cake since the old lady left. That mean creature, the cook, had nothing but toast for her tea. However there was some gingerbread left in the sideboard. I brought some pieces home. You will find it not so bad."

(To be continued.)



THE ZOO.

BY THE REV. J. G. WOOD.

Illustrated by HARRISON WEIR.

CHINCHILLA, JERBOA, AND MUSQUASH.

SINCE seal-skin came into fashion Chinchilla fur seems to have gone out of favour.

Yet not many years ago it was the one fur which ladies were proud of wearing in winter time, and was hardly less valued than the sable itself. Even the beautiful ermine was not held in such esteem as the chinchilla. There was much reason for the fashion, as the fur of the chinchilla is very long, very fine, very light, and has a lovely mixture of gray and white, the tints changing at every movement of the wearer.

There are always some chinchillas in the Gardens, and any of the attendants will tell you where to find them. I have noticed that ladies who have worn chinchilla fur, and do not know the animal from which it was taken, are always surprised when the creature is pointed out to them. They nearly all think that it must be at least as large as a hare, and can scarcely believe that the little round-

bodied, large-eared animal, with long hind legs and very tiny fore-legs, can be the chinchilla itself.

At first sight it appears to consist mostly of hind legs, ears and long tufted tail, and if it were stripped of its long fur, the body would seem to be even smaller than it really is. It comes from the hilly parts of South America, not living on the tops of the hills themselves, but in the little valleys which run between them.

Its habits are very much like those of the prairie-dog, of which it is a near relation. As however its hind legs are so long and slender, it is much more active than the prairie-dog, and even when a captive pops about with such quickness that the eye can scarcely follow its movements.

With its short but strong fore-paws it makes burrows in the ground, and with its paws it also digs up the roots on which it feeds. Like the squirrel it uses these paws like hands, and with them holds the food to its mouth. Like the rats and mice, it is a very cleanly animal, and is constantly engaged in washing and combing its long fur.

Not only is the skin used as a fur, but if one of them should be spoiled, the hair is taken from it and put aside. Then when a

sufficient quantity is gathered, it is spun into a fabric something like that which is made from the Caschmir goat.

As the chinchilla only measures ten inches from the tip of the nose to the root of the tail, and the skin of the head, neck, and flanks cannot be used, a great many skins are needed to make even a muff or a cape, and vast numbers of chinchillas were killed every year. Now that seal-skin has for a time taken its place, the little animals are allowed to live in peace, but I have no doubt that the fashion will come back again when the supply of seal-skin runs short, and then the chinchillas

jumps become short ; and if it should happen to lose the whole, it cannot jump at all.

Even in the Gardens the jerboa springs about with great speed, but no one can understand how active it really is until they see it at liberty, in its own country, bounding over the sandy plains. So quickly does it leap over the ground, that the swiftest greyhounds can scarcely catch it.

Like the last animal, it burrows in the ground, and can even make its way through the thin layers of stone which often covers the soil, by using its strong teeth to nibble its way through them. Great numbers of jerboas



will suffer as they used to do some forty years ago.

Something like the chinchilla in appearance, except that its hind legs and tail are very much longer, is the Jerboa of North Africa, several of which are sure to be in the Gardens.

The very long tail seems to be used like the tail of a kite, and to serve as a balance to the body, as the animal passes through the air in the enormous leaps which its long hind legs enable it to make. When by some accident, it has lost a part of its tail, its

live in company, so that the soil is as full of holes as that of a rabbit warren.

This is one of the many little creatures which are mentioned in the Old Testament as mice, and were not allowed to be used for food. There are many kinds of jerboas, and Canon Tristram says that one of them whose body only measured five and a half inches, had hind legs of the same length, and a tail eight inches long. Its whiskers were three inches in length, so that it seemed to be little but hind legs, tail and whiskers. It has fairly large ears, but not so large as those of the chinchilla.

The colour of the jerboa is a pale yellow brown above and white below. The furry end of the tail is black, except the tip, which is white.

We have seen how the beaver passes much of its time in the water, and we shall find that several other rodents follow its example. Our own water-rat, or water-vole, as it ought to be called, can be seen at liberty in our own country, so that there is no need to visit the Gardens in order to study its habits. But there are one of two natives of other lands which may be seen in the Gardens, and are worth the trouble of watching. One of them is the Coypu, or racoonda of Central America, which has the habit of washing its food, just like the racoon.

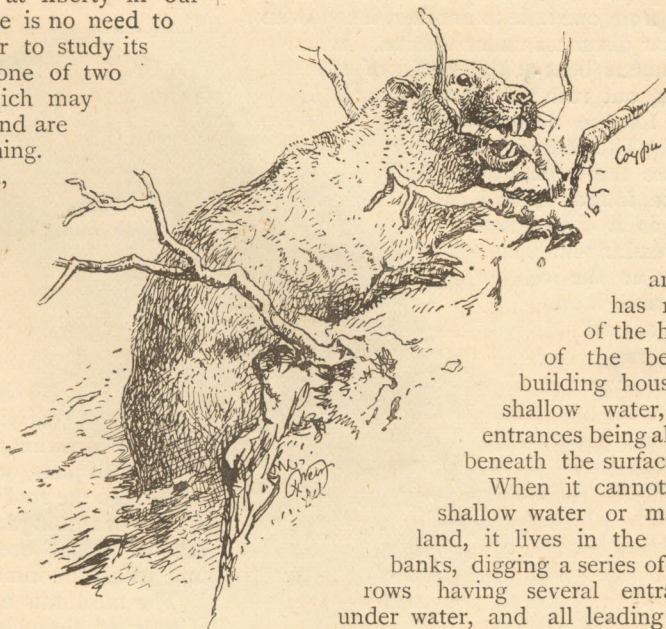
Pull up a root of grass and throw it to the coypu. The animal will go up to it and sniff at it, as if not quite sure that the grass may not be poisonous. Then it will pick up the grass in its fore paws and shake it violently, so as to get rid of the earth. Then, in order to make it quite clean, it will carry the grass to the water, dip it below the surface, and dabble it in the water for some time before eating it.

It is very much larger than the water-rat, its length being about two feet six inches. Its colour is pale brown with a dash of red, and its large front teeth are of a bright orange colour.

A still more interesting creature is the

Musquash, sometimes called the Musk-rat or Ondatra, of North America. It is not quite so large as the coypu. The front teeth are yellow instead of orange, and the claws are white.

Its colour is dark brown above, with a little red on its sides and legs, and the under surface is light gray.



This animal has many of the habits of the beaver, building houses in shallow water, the entrances being always beneath the surface.

When it cannot find shallow water or marshy land, it lives in the river-banks, digging a series of burrows having several entrances under water, and all leading to a central chamber in which the creature makes its bed. The skin of the musk-rat is much used by furriers, as it makes good lining to winter coats and cloaks. More than a million of these skins were sold at one auction, each being valued at from sixpence to ninepence.

Hunters, who make a business of killing the musk-rat for the sake of its skin, do not trouble themselves about those which inhabit the rivers, as too much time is occupied in driving the animals out of their burrows. So, they prefer the "musquash towns" of the

marshes, where five or six animals live in a single house.

Musquash hunting is mostly carried on in the winter, when the fur is in the best condition, and the water is frozen so that the hunters can walk on the ice to the houses, or "lodges" as they are called.

Now the musk-rat always has certain breathing-holes in the ice, which it keeps open, just as is done by the seal, so that by going from one hole to another, it can swim to great distances under the ice. When the hunters beat at the roofs of the lodges, out rush the musk-rats, and make for the nearest breathing-hole. The hunter however can see the animal through the ice, follows it, and as soon as it comes near the breathing-hole, he strikes at the ice, and drives it on. The animal swims as far as it can,

but can seldom go more than forty yards farther without breathing, when it dies, and floats at the surface of the water. A hole is then cut in the ice, the dead animal taken out, its skin stripped off, and rubbed on the inside with salt.

The whole business scarcely takes ten minutes, and an expert hunter will prepare many skins in a day's work, selling them to the dealer at about fivepence each, a poor skin fetching about threepence or fourpence, while a very fine one will bring sevenpence or a little more.

In the summer time the hunter wades

among the lodges armed with a four-pronged barbed-spear, like that which is used for spearing salmon, and when the musk-rats rush from their houses, and try to escape by swimming, they are struck with the spear and pulled out of the water. The best furs however are those which are taken in the winter, as there are no holes in the skin. Many are caught in traps, but must be taken out at once as if they are found by their comrades, they are at once torn to pieces. The traps are so set that



when a musk-rat is taken the trap falls into the water, carrying the animal with it and drowning it. Sometimes the hunters go in pairs, one of them driving his spear through the roof of the lodge, and taking his chance of striking some of the inmates, while a second hunter breaks the lodge to pieces, and spears the inmates as they try to escape.

The musk-rats are playful creatures, and, if watched through a telescope, they can be seen jumping into the water, chasing each other up and down any logs or small islands, and acting just like a set of schoolboys at play.

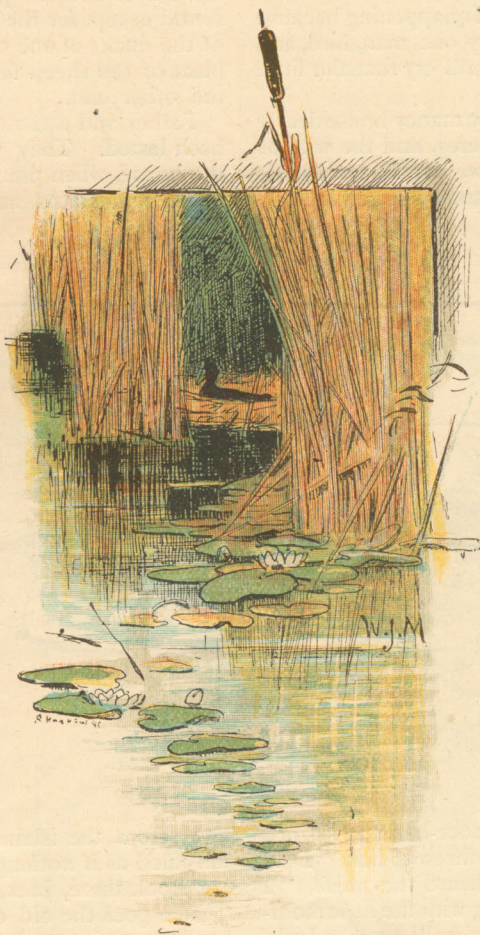
The musquash feeds mostly on fresh water and bank herbs but, like our own water-vole, it has been known to make its way to gardens nearly a mile from water, and rob them of their crops. The musquash contrives to get at the turnips, carrots and parsnips in a very clever manner. It is not strong enough to pull them out of the ground, so it burrows under them, scrapes away the earth all round them, and then carries off the root.

THE NEST ON THE DUCK POND.

BY KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

THERE is, not many miles from London, one of the prettiest old manor-houses that ever was seen. It has three pointed gables in front with low broad lattice windows. The upper story projects over the lower one, and both are half-timbered with dark oak; the low arched doorway leads into an oak-panelled entrance passage. In front is a square garden with grassplots and flower borders, and to-day, the tall white and yellow lilies are sunning themselves, and rejoicing in the visits of the bees and the butterflies.

A moat goes all round the garden, and on the right as one stands facing the house this widens into a good-sized piece of water bordered by grey willows and tender green reeds; on the side nearest the house there is an open fence, on the further side, behind the grey willows, is a high grassed bank, and on the top of this is another lovely garden, where the roses are backed by a row of blue green cabbages; a pergola covered with climbing plants borders this garden, and looks down the high grassed bank at the



little island in the midst of the water.

A timid moor-hen found out this quiet retreat a year ago, and built a nest among the reeds and she brought up a young family of moor-chicks. The dear little brown specks looked very pretty as they followed their mother over the water, which is so long and so broad that there is plenty of room for them and for the ducklings who roost under coops on the opposite bank. But the moor-chicks flew away long ago, and the gardener says the moor-hen is now busy hatching five new eggs.

To-day, however, the peaceful scene is suddenly disturbed. From the nest on the island, hidden among the tall reeds, there comes a sudden outcry, then a rustling and a fluttering, a violent quacking, and then again the shrill outcry.

The roses, which had begun to feel rather sleepy in the heat, raised their heavy heads, and one or two half-blown lilies opened widely in their wonder at such an unusual disturbance.

A white carnation just outside the pergola, who has always boasted its knowledge of

all that happens, burst its green petticoats with curiosity, and has made so large a rent that half its petals come peeping through delicate white tatters.

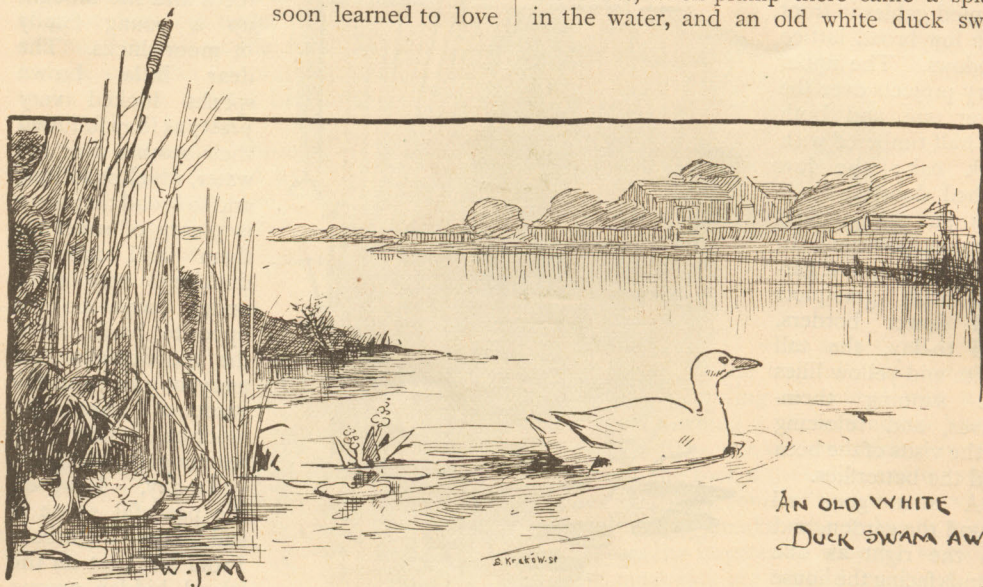
No one can see what is happening because of the tall reeds, but every one, man, bird, and beast, can hear by her shrill cry that the little moor-hen is in trouble.

The master of the pretty manor-house dearly loved all the dumb creatures, and the wild as well as the tame birds soon learned to love

came in sight of the island, "what's all that noise about?"

But almost as he spoke the noise ceased, the leaves left off quivering, there was not a sound except for the "quack, quack, quack," of the ducks at one end of the water, and the bleat of the sheep feeding in the meadow at the other end.

Father and son stood still listening, but the hush lasted. They were just going back to the house, when plump there came a splash in the water, and an old white duck swam



AN OLD WHITE
DUCK SWAM AWAY.

him, even the wee timid moor-hen had learned to come for the crumbs he threw to her. "Dear me," he said, when he heard the noise, "I hope there's nothing wrong with the little moor-hen." Then he turned and called out, "Jack, Jack, come here." Jack was just six; he was in the garden behind the pergola, watching two ants who were trying to remove a bit of stick; he did not care to be disturbed, for the ants' perseverance interested him, but he got up at once and ran to his father.

"Oh! Father, father," he said when he

away from the island, to all appearances as unruffled as if nothing had happened.

"Look there, Jack," the boy's father said, "there goes the old duck, and I believe she has been trying to disturb the moor-hen."

"That's wicked of her, father," Jack looked solemn, "when the dear little moor-hen has laid her eggs in her own nest. I believe," he said confidentially, "that duck is no better than a cuckoo."

Evening came, the air was very warm and

still. Jack had gone for a long walk after tea ; and now he came in to say good-night to his father and mother before he went to bed.

"Come along, old man," his father said, "we'll just go and see if the little moor-hen's all right."

When they reached the water-side everything was quite quiet, there was not even a rustle in the grey willow leaves that bent down in some places and almost touched the water.

"It's all right, Jack, now you must go indoors."

"Hark !" Jack held up his fat brown forefinger.

There was certainly something to listen to, such a flutter, and then an outcry burst forth in the reedy island. The reeds waved this way and that, but they grew thickly, and nothing could be seen of the combatants. Gradually, as Jack and his father listened, the sounds changed, the cries of the moor-hen grew fainter and fainter, and the loud quacking of the duck seemed to proclaim her victory.

Jack's face was very red. "That old duck's at her tricks again, father."

"Tell ye what it is, sir," Newton the gardener had come up to the wooden fence, where Jack and his father were standing, "the old duck means to have the nest, sir, and the little moorhen will be nowhere."

"I say, Newton," Jack's face was crimson with excitement, as he tugged at the gardener's coat, "can't you go in

the punt and collar that old duck and put her under a coop—she ought to be well punished."

Newton shook his head.

"Nay, Master Jack, the duck has the best right to the place after all, the island was made, I take it, for the ducks. The moor-hen is but a stray like, and it ain't of no mortal use neither," he said in a low tone, for he remembered, just in time, that the moor-hen was one of his master's pets.

"Hark !" Jack said again.

High above the duck's quack of triumph came a loud shrill cry, so much louder than



W. J. M.

D. Kraków, Sc

any that had ever been heard from the moor-hen that the master and his gardener both looked startled, and Jack stood with eyes and mouth as round as three O's.

Once more the loud shrill cry went up from among the reeds, followed by a fresh struggle and splashing, and a fresh burst of quacking from the moor-hen's flat-billed foe.

For the third time the shrill cry sounded, and then far off, coming as it seemed, out of the indistinct distance beyond the end of the water, there was an answering cry, and flying with outstretched wings was seen a tiny brown bird, which grew as it came rapidly nearer into a likeness of the moor-hen herself. The bird came on and dipped into the water, a few rapid strokes brought it to the island, and then it was lost to sight among the reeds.

In his excitement, Jack caught hold of his

chin, and stood squeezing it with both his fat little hands. His father was really quite as much interested although he made no outward sign.

The quacking at once became louder and fiercer, the beating of wings and fluttering was more violent, and the moor-hen and her mate were still more vociferous in asserting their rights. All at once there

was a rushing scramble, and the old duck, with all her plumage ruffled and standing out on end, rolled out from the reeds and fell with a great splash into the water.

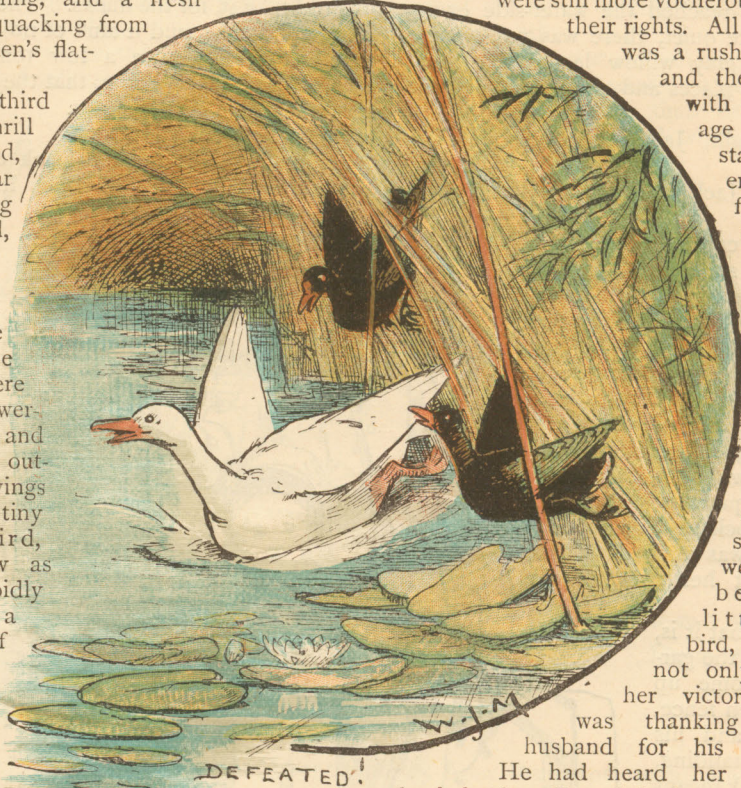
Then the moor-hen and her mate set up a song of rejoicing—at least Jack called it a song as he went home to bed. Poor little brown

bird, she was not only happy in her victory, but she

was thanking her little husband for his timely aid.

He had heard her pathetic cry for help far off, and had not rested till he arrived, just in time to save her from her strong enemy.

Some day I will tell you what happened to the big old duck after she fell into the pond.





A BROKEN VASE.

By F. S. POTTER.

THERE it stood with quite a large piece broken from it. It was his mother's beautiful Japanese vase, and Hubert was in great trouble.

Whether he had been actually forbidden to go into the drawing-room alone I cannot say, but he knew quite well that he ought not to have been there. Yet seeing the door open he had been tempted to enter, for there were many pretty things within which he wished to look at in his own way: he had spent a good half hour in fingering them.

How the accident happened Hubert did not himself exactly know: but his little legs being short he had climbed on a chair, the better to see the treasures on one of the tables, and getting down again he had slipped and fallen. He had picked himself up none the

worse for his tumble, he had also picked up a screen which had been upset in his fall, and then it was that he had seen the broken vase. He thought that the falling screen must have struck it.

He expected that his mother would be very angry when she knew of it: what must he do? What he ought to do was very plain—he ought to go straight to her and tell her all about it. That was what a good and a brave boy would have done. But Hubert, though not a bad boy, was not quite so brave as he should have been. He had not the courage to face his mother's displeasure.

No one knew that he had come into the drawing-room, of that he felt sure; and if he did not tell any one that he had been there it would not be supposed that he had done the mischief. He did not, you see, intend to tell a falsehood; he simply thought to escape disgrace by saying nothing.

So he stole softly out. But at the top of the stairs he met Margaret. Margaret was the nursemaid. "Why, where have you been, Master Hubert?" she cried. "I have been looking for you ever so long." Then she noticed the open door. "Why, you have not been in the drawing-room all this time, have you?"

Hubert, as we know, had not meant to tell an actual falsehood. He did not wish to tell one. Yet when this question came, his only choice seemed to lie between admitting where he had been and telling one. He was not brave enough to admit the truth, and he said "No."

"No," was very easily said, but it was not so easy for Hubert to forget that he had said it. He knew that a lie is as wicked as well as a disgraceful thing, and the thought that he

had told one made him feel very uncomfortable. None of his playthings could make him happy that afternoon, for whatever he did the recollection of the broken vase, and still worse that of the falsehood he had told to screen himself, would come upon him again and again in a way that made his heart sink.

That recollection was with him in his bed before he went to sleep, and it came upon him more bitterly than ever when he woke next morning. Poor Hubert found that a guilty conscience is by no means a pleasant companion.

Before that morning was passed he grew so miserable that he could keep his trouble to himself no longer. He went to his mother, and sobbing as he did so, told her how unhappy he was, and how sorry that he had broken her vase.

And then, what do you suppose that he learned? Why, that there had been no need for him to have been afraid or to have told a lie. The vase had been broken before he went into the drawing-room, and his mother had known of it. Foolish Hubert! had he only had the courage to go to her at once he might have saved himself all those hours of unhappiness, and what was still more important, the guilt and shame of a falsehood.





A VOICE.

BY MRS. ISLA SITWELL.

"**L**END Boy oo's 'pade, Sissy dear."

"I can't," said Sissy; "I want it my own self."

"Only for minute, to dig Boy's daisy."

"I've told you I can't. I'm busy. You mustn't be so tiresome."

Boy looked very sad. Mother came up; she did not speak to Sissy, but she said to Boy, "Come for a little walk with mother, dear."

Boy trotted off, quite happy; and Sissy marched away with the spade to her garden.

"I like much better to be by myself," she said. Then she began to dig so vigorously that she rooted up some of her plants.

A little brown bird came and sat on a spray close by and sang, and as he sang, something said to Sissy, "Oh, what an unkind little girl."

Sissy did not like it; she walked away and began to smell her roses. But they were not

half so sweet as usual, and she pricked her little nose on the thorns.

She could not hear the bird now, but she could hear the voice quite distinctly. "Oh, what a very unkind little girl," it said.

Sissy could not bear it. She threw down the spade, and began to cry.

After a little while she dried her eyes and ran in to nurse.

"Please, nurse, will you make me tidy? I want to go down to the gate to meet mother and Boy."

"Very well, Miss Sissy, but you must not go outside."

It seemed such a long time before Sissy saw them coming. She stood first on one foot and then on the other, and flattened her face against the bars.

They did come at last, however, and mother beckoned to Sissy. She ran as fast as she could to Boy, and gave him such a great hug.

"You may have my spade," she said.

"You may have it all the afternoon, if you like."

"Kind Sissy," said Boy, and mother smiled at her little girl.

The brown bird sat on the spray and sang when they went to the garden, but the voice that had troubled Sissy was silent.



HE WOULD BE A SOLDIER.

HE had been playing at soldiers all day, this little boy of five, but his head was scarcely on his pillow when he fell asleep. It seemed to him that his cot grew into a large bed all at once, and that he grew into a very tall soldier. In the morning when he got up, he found a whole lot of soldier's things on a chair by his bed all ready to put on—a beautiful red coat, and real epaulettes, and white trousers, a belt, a sword, a gun, a helmet and top boots with spurs. How grand he looked when he got them all on! He was just looking at himself in the glass, when his man-servant tapped at the door. "Please, captain, your horse is at the door."

He was just in time. Soon after, he rode past the house at the head of his regiment. The band played "The girl I left behind me." They were going off to the war. That very night a great battle was fought. Cannons roared, shells burst at his very feet. He killed a great many of the enemy, his

sword was quite bloody. Still he was not hurt. It was only when the fight was over that a great blast from one of their own cannon came whizzing past and carried off one of his legs, and killed his horse under him. He knew nothing more for a long time. When at last he opened his eyes,

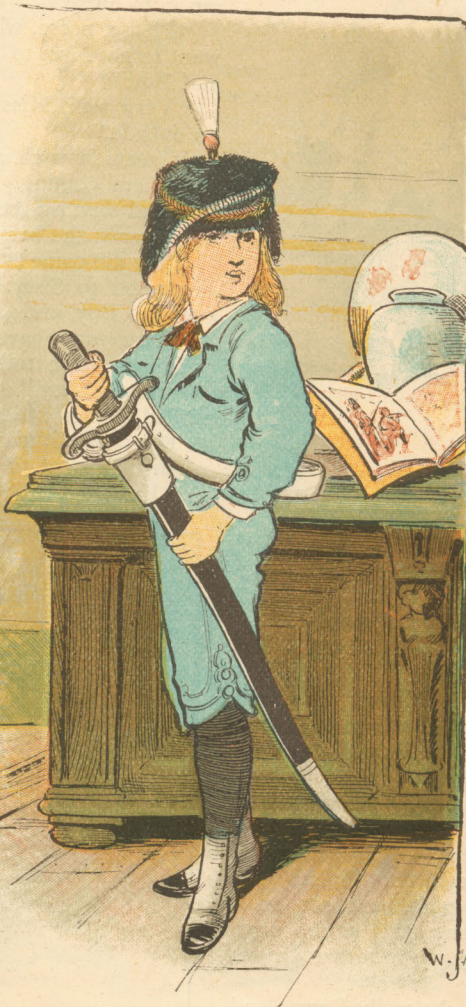
he was lying in a tent where they had carried him, and a kind nurse told him what had happened.

When he was well enough, he was taken back to his home. Stumpy, stumpy stumpy, stumpy, he hurried along the hall, with his wooden leg, and now, oh, how nice! he is once more in his mother's arms.

"I won't go to a war again," he said as he looked up in his mother's face.

"Of course not," said she, "soldiers must have rest." He was pleased to find he hadn't a stump leg after all, and soon fell off into a more peaceful sleep.

He had been so restless in his cot that nurse had fetched his mother, who seems to have taken him just at the right moment into her arms to quiet him.





A HOUSE TO LET.

By MRS. MOLESWORTH.

CHAPTER II.

POPPY.



BRIGHT-EYES handed the ginger-bread crumbs to her husband. He thanked her politely.

"I am not difficult to please, my love," he remarked as he munched it. "Better by far, I always say, the poorest fare if in peace and security. I *could* even eat bread and cheese if we were put to it."

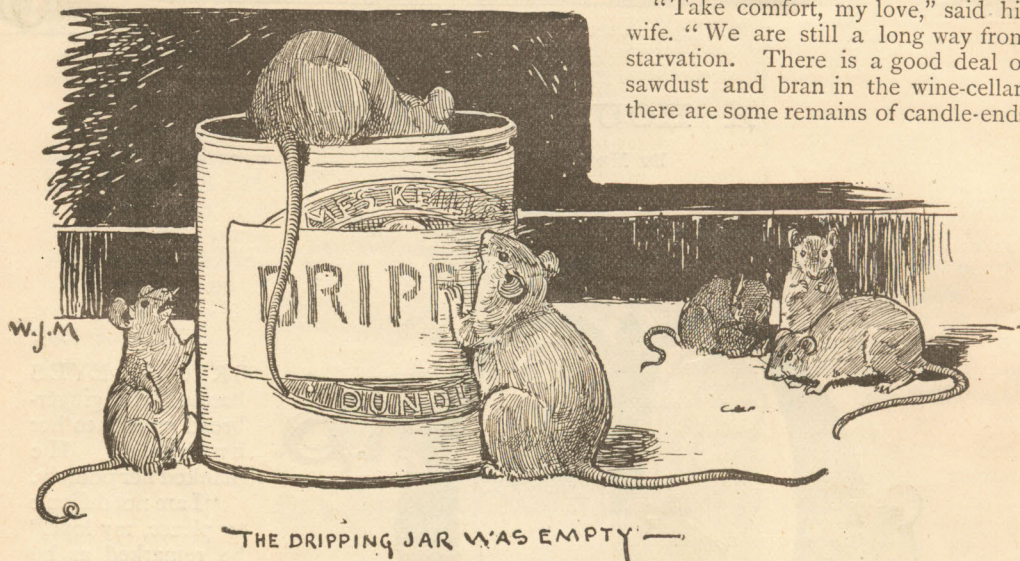
"And you think the coast is really clear?" said Mrs. Bright-eyes anxiously.

"I feel sure of it," he replied. "This

afternoon I shall reconnoitre again, and if all is right the children may accompany us on a stroll round the kitchen, dear things. How often they have wished to visit it! We shall be able to introduce them to all our pet haunts, and show them the spots where you and I wandered in our sentimental days. The pastry cupboard, the shelf where stand the jars of dripping, the sugar canister! Ah, what sweet memories are mingled with them all—and to think we can now visit them as

The young Bright-eyes were not disconcerted. They found plenty to amuse them—it was great fun to rush about the kitchen, and in their ignorance they did not perceive the bareness of the land. There were still crumbs here and there and some small fragments of cheese not to be despised, though their Papa looked down upon it as most plebeian food for mice of quality. And he was too shocked and startled by the state of things to rebuke them for eating anything they found.

"Take comfort, my love," said his wife. "We are still a long way from starvation. There is a good deal of sawdust and bran in the wine-cellar, there are some remains of candle-ends



often as we choose! This day is a reward for all our sufferings."

But Mr. Bright-eyes' jubilation was rather damped, when, accompanied by his promising family, he had made the proposed tour. The pastry cupboard was empty; of the jars of dripping there remained but one, containing but a mere smearing; the sugar canister had bodily disappeared! Papa and Mamma Bright-eyes looked rather blank.

"What a mean revenge!" they said to each other.

in the kitchen dresser, and even the scraps of oilcloth about the passages are not to be despised in case of necessity."

But Papa Bright-eyes nearly fainted at her words. I am afraid he was something of a gourmand.

"Hush, hush, my love," he whispered, "you mean well, but your suggestions are terrible. Could one have believed that human spite would have gone so far? Could one have believed in such ingenuity of cruelty? The nameless one has left us, it is

true, but only to a fate almost as cruel as her claws—to slow starvation. We must emigrate, my love, we must emigrate!”

“To a country where no nameless ones are to be found, then, I hope,” said Mrs. Bright-eyes. “For my part I’d rather make the best of sawdust and oilcloth, and even a nibble at wall paper now and then, than risk coming across any of that lot, I must say,”

But as a week or two passed, and the last scraps of cheese had disappeared, and mouldy bran grew rather monotonous fare, even Mamma Bright-eyes began to urge upon her husband the desirability of a voyage of discovery into one of the neighbouring houses which were not to let. And there is no knowing what the unfortunate family might not have been driven to, had not an unexpected event happened.

Till now the house had been left empty. The old gentleman and lady were in some ways a little too economically inclined, and they had felt so sure of finding tenants or purchasers at once that they had not thought it necessary to put in a caretaker. But it was a bad season for letting or selling houses, and at last their agent persuaded them to put some one in charge who could “keep the dust down” and answer any inquiries that

might be made at the door. So one morning Jack and Bessie, whose colds were quite gone by this time, on coming in from their usual walk, were very much surprised as they passed No. 9 to see a little girl standing at the area gate, looking up and down the street with eager eyes. She was a pleasant-faced child, with short black hair, bright dark eyes and rosy cheeks, and her pinafore though thread-bare in some places and darned in others, was clean.

Bessie, who was of a sociable disposition and not troubled with shyness, stopped short at sight of the little maiden and looked at her inquiringly. The nurses and the two little brothers were some way down the street, coming along more slowly. A smile came over the rosy face, and to Bessie this smile was irresistible.

“Are you—have you come to live here?” she added.

“Please’m, yes’m,” replied the child promptly. “Mother and me’s a-caretaking, but mother’s out charing. She said as how I might stand ’ere to take the air a bit—it’s beautiful air it is, Miss, in this ’ere street,” she burst out enthusiastically, “but as how I mustn’t step outside the gate. It



IT WAS GREAT FUN
TO RUSH ABOUT

isn't every day as mother's charing — just permiscous-like you see."

"Are you very dull alone?" asked Bessie, sympathisingly. She could not by any means understand all that the child said, but this question seemed safe ground.

"Bless you no, Miss. It's a lovely house—it is a pleasure to sweep the rooms. And there's mice, Miss, as'd make you die with laughing. They seem half starved, they're so uncommon hungry. They'll eat the crumbs and we as close as close. I never did see such mice."

"How *very* nice," exclaimed Bessie, feelingly. "Jack, do you hear? I



wish I could see them. We'll talk to you again another day, little girl, but we must run in now. That's our house opposite."

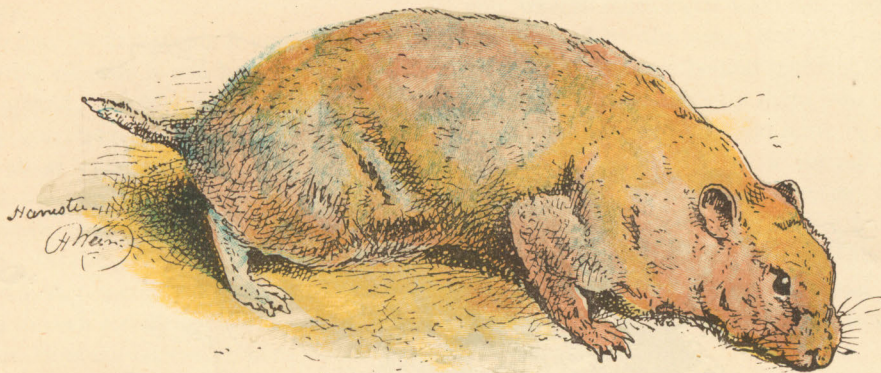
"That's our nursery window—the one with the bars, do you see?" added Jack, eager to put in a word.

"You may look up there and we'll nod to you," said Bessie condescendingly. "What's your name?"

"Please 'm Poppy 'm. Leastways I'm called Poppy, but S'lina Mary's my proper name?"

"Sleenermary, what a queer name. I like Poppy better. We'll call you Poppy," said Bessie, as she and Jack ran off.

(To be continued.)



THE ZOO.

BY THE REV. J. G. WOOD.

Illustrated by HARRISON WEIR.

HAMSTER AND LEMMING.

THERE are two rodents of Northern Europe which you must make a point of seeing.

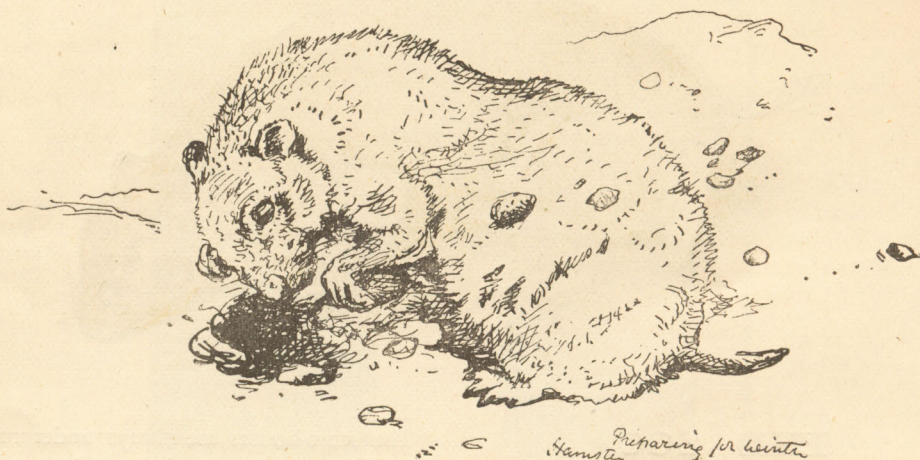
There is nothing remarkable about their looks, and you might easily glance at them and go away, without even suspecting that they were worth notice.

One of them is the Hamster, a creature which is much like our water-vole, except that it is rather larger, measuring about a foot in length from the tip of the nose to the root of the tail. It is grayer in colour on the back, and there are some patches of pale yellow on the cheeks and sides.

It does very great harm to the crops, not only feeding upon them in the summer time, but laying up large stores in the autumn, so that it shall have plenty of food through the winter, without needing to leave its home in frosty weather.

The store-houses are always underground, and every hamster has its own burrow, not even the male and female living in the same home. At least two chambers, and sometimes more, are dug at a depth of at least five feet, one of them being always used as a bed-chamber. Leading to the chambers are several burrows, always having two entrances, one being almost upright and the other sloping. This latter is called the "creeping hole," and is always used when the hamster carries the earth out of the burrow.

Towards the end of summer the hamster begins to dig its winter home, having spent all the summer in a shallow burrow without chambers. When the crops are ripe, the hamster lays up its winter store carrying off its booty in two large cheek-pouches, one on each side of its face. No less than sixty pounds of wheat have been found in the chamber of a single hamster, and in another case a hundredweight of beans were dug from a hamster's larder. There are always cross burrows leading from the chambers to the chief tunnels, so that the



hamster can easily pass from and to any portions of its home.

In consequence of this habit, the farmers look for the burrows of the hamster, and dig them up just before winter, so that the storehouses are quite full, and the hamsters have not had time to consume their store of winter food.

It requires so large a store because it does not, like the squirrel and dormouse, sleep through the greater part of the winter, but is awake for nearly two months before the squirrel. It does not however leave its burrow, but remains under the earth until the warm weather has fairly set in.

The hamster is a fierce and very stupid animal. It is so fierce that it will fly at any object which may be in its way, even though one of its own kind should cross its path. It is too stupid to know what fear means, and, instead of getting out of the way of a waggon,

it will fasten on to the nearest wheel, and keep its hold until it is crushed, and it has been known to seize in its mouth a bar of hot iron, without seeming to know that the pain which it must have felt was caused by the object which it was trying to bite.

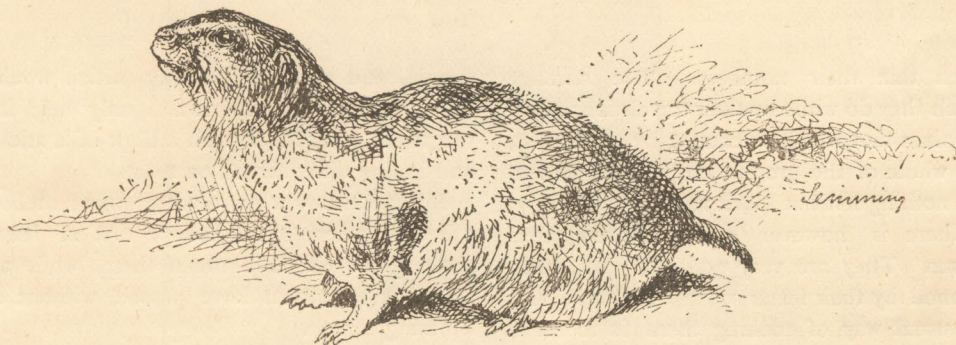
Vast numbers of hamsters are killed every year, as many as eighty thousand having been destroyed in a single season. There is a double reason for killing them. In the first place, they do so much harm that their numbers must be kept down, and in the next place, their skins are dressed and used as fur, which, though warm and soft, is thought to be coarse, and fetches but a small price.

Our common field mice may be watched in our own meadows, and so I shall say nothing about them. But in Northern Europe there is a creature called the Lemming which looks much like our short-tailed field-mouse,

but which has a much more wonderful history.

No one, on first seeing it could guess what a terrible creature it can be. It mostly lives in Lapland, Norway, and Sweden, and for many years together will be seldom seen. But, all at once, and without any known cause, vast armies of lemmings assemble in the north, and begin to march towards the south. Nothing except a smooth and upright wall will stop them, and even if they should come to such a wall, they will try to march over it, climbing on each other's bodies until

The smaller body passes through Norway and travels southwards until the lemmings are checked by the sea. But they are not stopped by it, those behind pressing onwards those in front, and driving them into the sea. Now the lemming can swim fairly in smooth water and can even cross a tolerably wide river. The smallest waves however, even in fresh water, are too much for the lemming, which sinks and is drowned. The waves therefore of the North Sea are fatal to the lemmings, so that not one which enters the sea escapes alive.



they make great heaps at the foot of the wall, those which are below being smothered under the bodies of their comrades. Fire will not stop them, for they crowd into it until they extinguish it, and, as we shall see, water is of no more use than fire. If they should come to a haystack, they eat it, and still press onwards.

Now look at a map of Northern Europe, and see the track which these singular travellers follow. Starting from the north, they are divided into two great bodies by the range of the Krolen Mountains, which are the boundary between Norway and Sweden.

The second, a larger body, starts from Lapland, and passes through Sweden. Vast numbers of the lemmings are driven into the Gulf of Bothnia, or, if they go far enough to the East to escape the Gulf of Bothnia, they are drowned in the Gulf of Finland. As for the rest, they meet the same fate in the Baltic. Of the millions which start on this strange journey not one returns to the North whence they came.

On their way, the lemmings are followed by birds and beasts of prey, which feast on them through their whole journey, and very



much thin their numbers. The damage which they do while on their travels is scarcely less than that which is caused by the locust, the whole of the ground crops being eaten, and nothing left but black ruins.

There is however one point in their favour. They are very good to eat when fattened by their feasts upon the crops, and the usual way of cooking them is to serve them on toast, as is done with quails, larks, and other small birds.

Like the hamster, the lemmings are too stupid to know the meaning of danger, and even when not engaged in travel, have no idea of getting out of the way, but will allow themselves to be trampled under foot rather than move aside for a yard or so. When they hear a footstep, they set up a sharp, angry,

squeal, and many a lemming which would have escaped unseen if it had only held its tongue, is seen, killed with a blow of a stick, and in due time, served on toast.

No one knows when these strange marches will take place, but I believe that at least seven years elapse between them, while as many as seventeen have passed without a lemming march.

In spite however of the great losses caused by these travels, and by numbers which are killed every year, the lemmings are always more or less troublesome.

Although so many are killed, their numbers do not seem to decrease, for each pair of lemmings will have at least two families every year, and sometimes three, each family being from six to eight in number.

THE STORY OF A SEAL.

By MRS. WALLACE.

THE seal of this story does not belong to the tribes that lead such a picturesque life on the Island of Jan-Mayen and on the ice-floes of the Arctic Ocean. It is the common seal that I am interested in.

These seals are never found in large herds, and seldom far away from land. They are not shy in places where they are not molested, and are gentle and inoffensive. The only time they are known to be fierce is when they hunt the salmon, their favourite food.

There used to be a great many in the Firth of Forth. It was there that Andrew Meldrum, an old sailor, caught the seal of the story one day as it lay asleep on the ledge of a rock. It was ready to plump into the sea at the approach of danger from land, never expecting enemies from the sea, so all he had to do was to put out his

hand and take it prisoner. He popped it into a large canvas bag he generally took home full of fish, and he wondered what his sisters would say when they saw it.

Andrew had bought a house in his native village on the East coast, and his two sisters kept it in order for him. The eldest was

called Kirsty and was a cross old woman; always in a fidget about having her doorsteps clean. Bell was much younger and brighter than her sister. She did the sewing and the light work of the house. "You'll no guess what I have got in my bag the day," said Andrew laughing when he came home; "it's a queer fish."

His sisters were amazed when he pulled out the pretty little baby seal with its large round blue eyes. Kirsty foresaw it would be an additional charge to her, and asked sharply what was to be done with it. "I can tak it back to the sea," retorted An-

drew, angry to find his prize so little appreciated. But Bell was delighted with it, and so it was agreed that it should be kept, and she carried it off in triumph to the garden.

Between the garden and the house there was a paved way, sheltered in winter, and

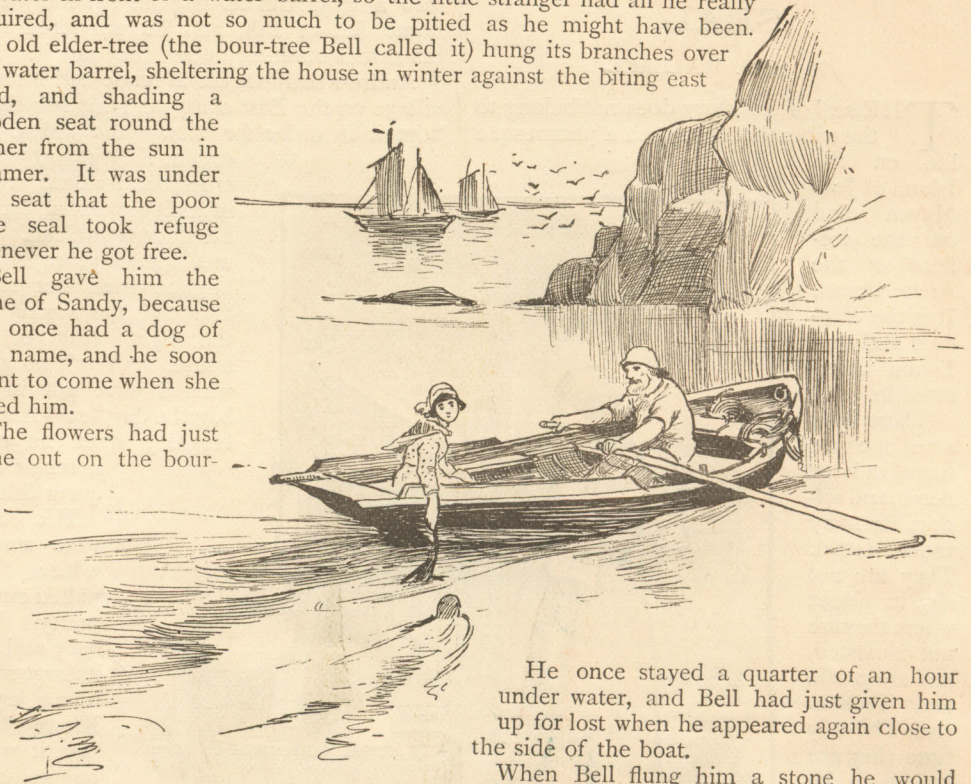


SANDY TAKING HIS BATH.

sunny in summer. At the end of the pavement there was always a tub of water in front of a water barrel, so the little stranger had all he really required, and was not so much to be pitied as he might have been. An old elder-tree (the bour-tree Bell called it) hung its branches over the water barrel, sheltering the house in winter against the biting east wind, and shading a wooden seat round the corner from the sun in summer. It was under this seat that the poor little seal took refuge whenever he got free.

Bell gave him the name of Sandy, because she once had a dog of that name, and he soon learnt to come when she called him.

The flowers had just come out on the bour-



He once stayed a quarter of an hour under water, and Bell had just given him up for lost when he appeared again close to the side of the boat.

When Bell flung him a stone he would dive for it and bring it back to her. She then gave him it as a reward, and he there and then swallowed it, however big it might be.

There was never any difficulty about getting home. He came up the steep street, and up the doorsteps as quickly as they did.

It was then that Kirsty began to take an ill-will to him in earnest. It was hard to have her doorsteps dirtied no doubt. Besides she had always looked upon the seal as so much food wasted.

On land Sandy was not a beauty, and his gait was particularly hideous, though quaint.

His coat was yellowish-brown with dark brown spots down the back and grew rather

tree, when Andrew suggested to Bell that they might take Sandy down to the sea and give him a swim. Bell was a little afraid they would never get him home again, for their house was ten minutes' walk from the harbour where they kept their boat, and the street down to it was steep.

However the day was fine, and she could not resist giving her pet a treat, as she thought. What was her surprise to find that he had to be forced into the water. It was only after repeated visits to the sea that he took to it. Then it was all right, and he swam after the boat, and plunged about in great delight.



"HE ALSO LEARNT TO GIVE A PAW"

rough as he got older. In the water he was very graceful.

When the autumn came and the flowers of the bour-tree had turned to berries Bell used to go out to the wooden seat with her work. She would sing the "Boatie Rows," or any familiar tune that came into her head, to her pet, and when he looked up at her with his great blue eyes she thought he was almost human. He was evidently very fond of music, and when Bell made him a whistle out of a twig of the elder-tree, he could soon blow it himself. He also learnt to give a paw; and shoulder a stick like a volunteer. His greatest feat was turning a summersault. He not only turned once, but never stopped

till he came to the end of the path. He was very fond of being caressed, and showed his gratitude by kissing Bell's hand in return. That is another trait that brings the seal a little nearer mankind than the dog. It does not lick your hand, and if it does not exactly kiss it, it lays its mouth on it.

These were the happy days of the seal—Bell found him grand company. It was when she was sitting out beside him, that, when she looked down to the sea, she noticed for the first time in her life how blue it was, and how gay the boats looked. At night too she would steal out to give Sandy a final stroke before going to rest.

This happy state of things went on for about five years, the fourth part of the life of a seal at least. Just then Bell had to go from home for a fortnight, and when she left she adjured Kirsty to take good care of Sandy.

Whether the seal was ill-fed or whether he really missed Bell it would be hard to say, but whatever was the cause, there is no doubt he got troublesome. He kept following Kirsty about as if he wanted to ask her something, and would not be driven off. She got very impatient with him and begged her brother to take him out of her sight.

Andrew wearied out with her constant grumbling, at last consented, and took him in his boat an immense distance out to sea. He

flung him in and rowed to shore as fast as he could, but Sandy had reached the shore before him.

Next day Andrew took him far along the coast in a direction he had never been, but it was all in vain. He clambered over the slippery rocks and next night home he came again much to the disgust of Kirsty. A third time Andrew had to start with the seal, and when he came back he assured her she should never see him more. Bell came home a few days after this. She gave her sister all the news of their friends, and then off she went to see her seal. Kirsty stopped her to her surprise, and told her they had sent it back to the sea and that they were well quit of it.

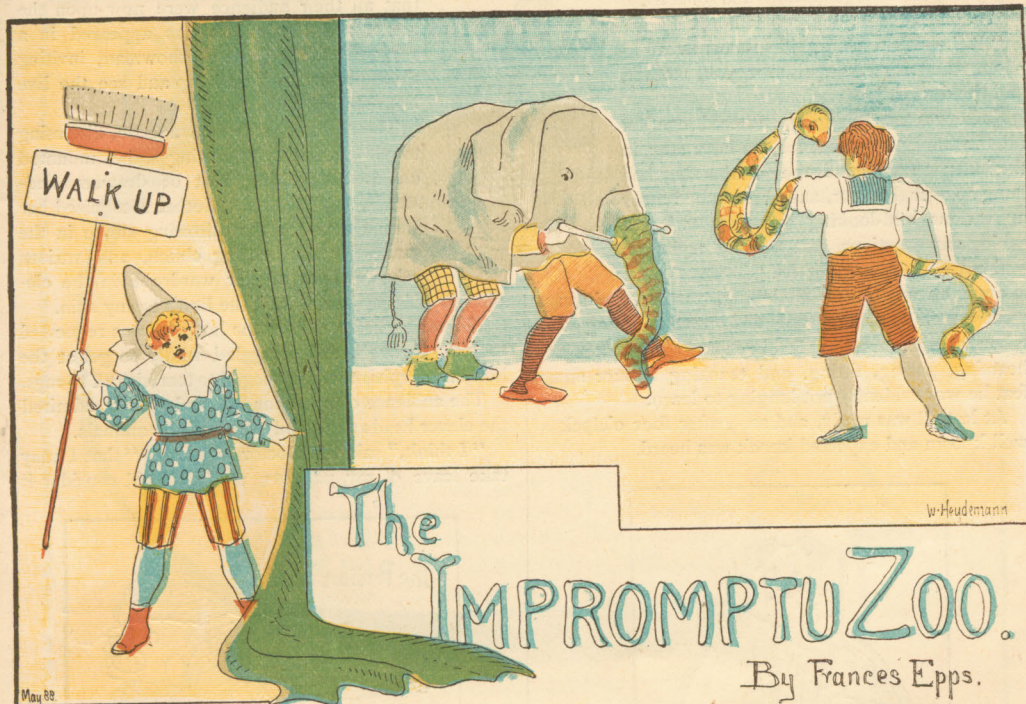
She little foresaw the tempest she had raised. Bell burst into tears and screamed out, "Tell me what you've done wi' Sandy." And in her grief there is no saying what she might have done, when the plaintive calf-like cry of the poor seal was heard at the door.

Bell flew to let him in, and hauled him along the passage, and as Kirsty would not let them into the kitchen, she went out at the back with him. He seemed very tired. She laid his head tenderly in her lap and wept over him.

Bell sat out beside her pet far into the night. At last Kirsty began to take fright. She saw she had gone too far. She was fond of Bell in her own way, and she knew Andrew would never forgive her if anything went wrong with Bell. So she crept out in the darkness, and said gently, "Bell, lass, I didna mean to vex you sae sair; come in and bring the beast wi' you."

There was something in the old cracked voice Bell had not heard before, that made her get up at once. It was not so easy to move the seal. He was panting and exhausted. However the two women managed to get him into the kitchen and they laid him before the fire for the night. In the morning he was dead.





The IMPROMPTU ZOO.

By Frances Epps.

"WELL, I do call this a jolly miserable way of spending Christmas holidays," said Hyde Major, to the fireside circle. The circle consisted of his two brothers and three cousins, all sitting wrapped up in blankets and dressing gowns, trying to be interested in books, unable to eat even the oranges just brought to them, and suffering great pain when forced to laugh at each other's absurd appearance, for alas! they all had mumps!

"Nurse said we must have had the mumps in us when we came home," remarked Hyde Minor after a gloomy pause, "I'm thankful they stayed in till after Christmas-day and those two parties."

"The Doctor said we must stay up here for a fortnight," groaned the eldest cousin, "so as to prevent the others taking it if possible; fancy a whole fortnight. What on earth shall we do cooped up in these two rooms?"

The boys felt far too miserable to answer or make any plans, and ate their bread and milk-tea in

silence. Happily this state of things did not last long. In a day or two the boys felt able to begin painting, making cardboard villages, stages, and so on.

Then nurse began to have plenty to do, for as the boys got better and better, the occupation and amusements became more and more enterprising, and needed a large stock of materials.

At last she received the following list of things to be provided:

- "1. Mother's long Indian scarf, and some gold braid.
- "2. A large stocking (cook's would do, because hers are grey), two drum sticks (not fowls'), the girdle of father's dressing-gown, and a grey shawl.
- "3. Some stiff white muslin, wire, spotted calico. (N.B.—the use of your needle and thread greatly desired.)

"4. A birch broom. A yellow shawl, some tow, cotton wool and newspapers, four large sheets of cardboard.

"5. A pair of large curtains and some rope.

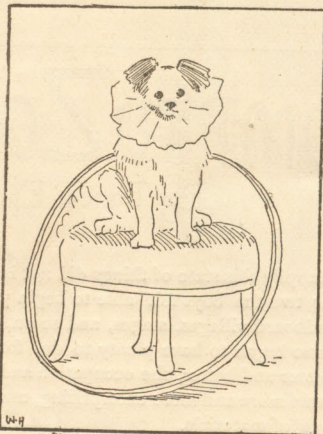
"6. Homer (the dog) and a hoop.

"P.S.—It's a secret till to-morrow afternoon, when it's a surprise for you, mother, and the doctor."

Nurse was most obliging, gathered together all the things required, let the boys stay in the inner room behind the curtains they had hung up over the door, and she stitched away at various odd-looking garments without asking any questions, and without trying to find out what was going on.

Such an amount of modelling, pasting, painting, went on all the afternoon, and next morning was taken up with arranging furniture and the—secret rehearsing, posing, fitting, and teaching Homer some feat he was evidently not longing to learn.

At last all was ready, and soon after four o'clock a well known and expected knock was heard.



"Well, Nurse, and how are the patients to-day? almost well?" questioned the kind old doctor as he entered the boys' room. "Dear me," he continued, looking round hastily, "you surely haven't let them go down yet; where are they all?"

A confused sound of roaring and trumpeting, mingled with suppressed giggling, and orders to "Stand still," "Hold tight," "Don't push," and impatient barks came from behind the curtain.

Mother's surprised voice, saying, "What are the boys about, Nurse," assured those young gentlemen



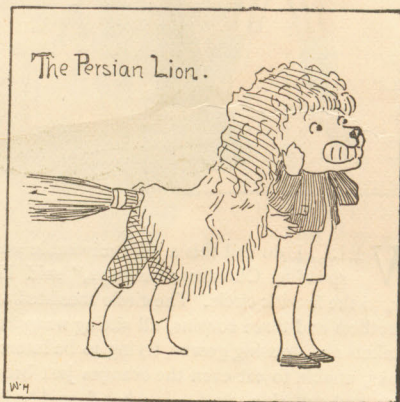
that all their audience were now upon the scene, and Hyde Minimus appeared in a gorgeous fancy dress as showman, inviting those present to "walk up and see the live lions stuffed with straw."

The curtains were drawn aside, disclosing to view a most interesting show, mounted on dressing-table, chest of drawers, bedsteads, as pedestals. Mother recognised her Indian scarf in the glittering snake in the snake-charmer's strong clutch, and various other articles of her wardrobe in the elephant's hide and trunk and the lion's tawny skin.

Homer barked loudly at the hoop he was requested to jump through, and struggled wildly to get at the lion and elephant, and managed to tear his ruff to rags.

The audience clapped loudly, and greatly admired the clever heads and good shape of the animals.

"I think," said the Doctor laughing, "that I may take leave of my patients, and I should consider it



quite safe, Mrs. Hyde, for them to mix with the others to-morrow."

The elephant trumpeted, the lion roared, the snake-charmer whistled and stamped, and the showman stood on his head and cheered. Homer barked his best.

At this moment Mr. Hyde was on the stairs, having come home early; he rushed up to the "invalids" room.

"Is the whole Zoo broken loose?" he shouted.

"Only the 'impromptu' Zoo, sir," said the showman, as Homer bit off the elephant's tail without his feeling it.

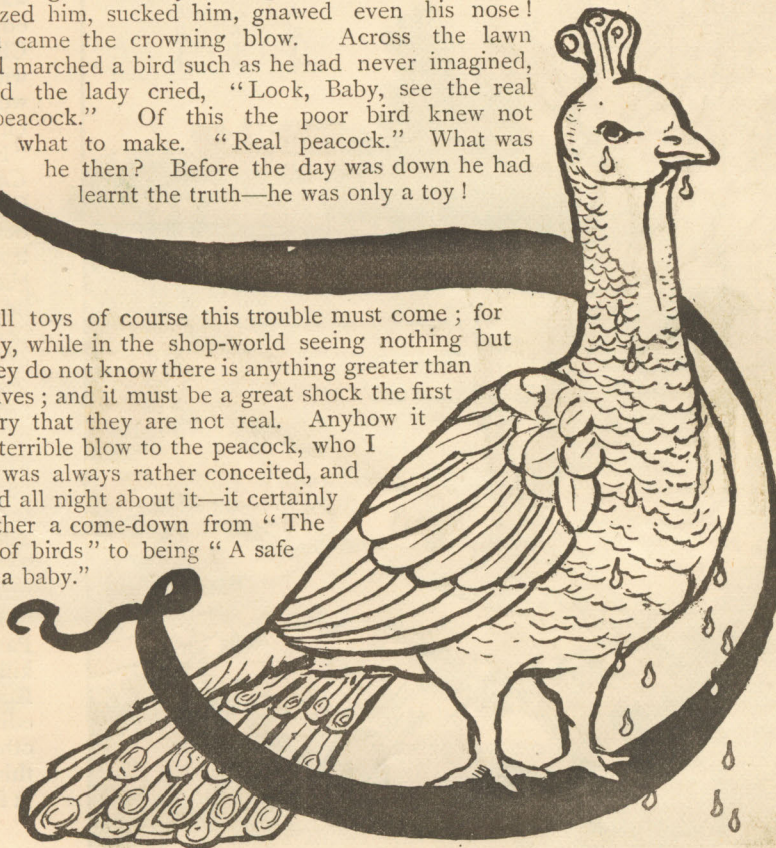
THE SAD PEACOCK

HE is only a gutta-percha peacock, only a toy after all! That morning, as usual, he had stood in the shop thinking his one thought, "I am the queen of birds!" A lady had said, "I must have this absurd creature;" and she had carried him away though he was trembling with rage.

Then he found himself in a lovely garden, and just as he was thinking, "No doubt I am to help to adorn this beautiful place," he was handed to a tiny, toothless girl, who lay kicking on the grass. Oh, how he suffered, as she squeezed him, sucked him, gnawed even his nose!

Then came the crowning blow. Across the lawn had marched a bird such as he had never imagined, and the lady cried, "Look, Baby, see the real peacock." Of this the poor bird knew not what to make. "Real peacock." What was he then? Before the day was down he had learnt the truth—he was only a toy!

To all toys of course this trouble must come; for naturally, while in the shop-world seeing nothing but toys, they do not know there is anything greater than themselves; and it must be a great shock the first discovery that they are not real. Anyhow it was a terrible blow to the peacock, who I expect was always rather conceited, and he cried all night about it—it certainly was rather a come-down from "The queen of birds" to being "A safe toy for a baby."



Chinese Pictures.

No. 1.

THE Child's Pictorial finds readers in far-away parts of the world. A few weeks ago a small Chinese book, with very curious pictures, was sent to the editor by a young Chinese reader, with the following words written on the outside: "From an lover of *Child's Pictorial* in China." The sender seems to be trying to learn English, and the book he forwards appears to be a kind of Chinese copy of *The Child's Pictorial*. Here is one of the pictures, which he heads in pencil: "A skilful science to kill all wild hares in Australia." The picture seems meant to show Professor Pasteur's way of killing rabbits in Australia. The editor will give other pictures from this curious book in future numbers.

計殲野兔

南洋澳大利亞暨日新蘭島一帶近忽有
有一種野兔愛馬躍馬千
成羣恣食田中不稼驅之復來捕之不盡
所到處皆成荒大有司以兔災入
告懸重賞六十一萬五千俾即克應求殲兔
妙計有名尚巴斯道者謂須用
瘟難若千頭通脚而膝讓成兔疫
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A HOUSE TO LET.

BY MRS. MOLESWORTH.

CHAPTER III.

FLIP'S APPEAL.



WHEN Poppy had had air enough and staring up and down the street enough, she retired into the kitchen. It was dinner time by now. She got out a plate with a bit of cold boiled bacon, and managed cleverly enough, by the aid of a shovel, to warm up a roast potato over from last night's supper. And then she sat down to enjoy this unusually good dinner, as happy as a queen. Had she not every reason to be happy? No more question of rent—a nice bit of fire, a good dinner, mother's face cheerier than it had been since the long ago golden days, remembered by little Poppy but as in a dream, when "father" was alive and earning good wages.

The smell of the bacon and hot potato skin reached other nostrils beside Poppy's. Father Bright-eyes was on the watch. Things had been coming to a very bad pass with him and his family the last few days, and hunger makes brave. Besides Poppy was far less alarming than a certain not-to-be-named personage. As she slowly finished the last scraps of her dinner, a slight, very slight sound behind her, made her look round, and the long tail of Papa Bright-eyes caught her glance ere he whisked it after him down the hole in the corner of the cupboard.

"Ah, there you are, mousey," said the little girl, "don't be afraid, poor dear. I'm not a-going to hurt you. And I've left some nice crumbs of potato skin and a bit of bacon rind for you. See there, I'll put it down in front of the 'earth, so as you can be nice and warm while you eats it. And I'm just a-going to take a nap, so I'll not even see as you're there. You've no call to be afraid—go and fetch all the fam'ly if you please. We've no cat—mother and me, we don't hold with cats."

Then Poppy curled herself up in mother's big old arm-chair, the one comfortable piece of furniture they possessed, and pretended to go to sleep, all out of kindness to Bright-eyes and his belongings. She lay so still that when Bright-eyes peeped out some way further; still the little figure in the big chair was motionless; he peeped up at her, and the scrap of bacon rind smelt so good that hunger overcame prudence, and in another minute he was dining most comfortably close to the fire where Poppy had placed the crumbs. It was long since he had had so good a meal, but he would not keep it all for himself. Back to the cupboard he flitted, returning in a moment with Mrs. Bright-eyes and the four small ones. There was not very much dinner for them after all, but what there was tasted very good, and not the tiniest crumb was left when they had finished.



AS HAPPY
AS
A QUEEN

All this time Poppy was peeping at them through her fingers, though she took care to keep perfectly still.

"One, two, three, four," she counted, "oh what fun! Six little mice. My! mustn't they just be hungry to come out so bold—poor little mice. I wish I'd more to give you. I'll try and save a scrap or two of my supper. Wouldn't the young lady and gentleman like to see them? That little fellow with the funny twist in his tail is the sharpest of all—how he does flash about! I wonder if they

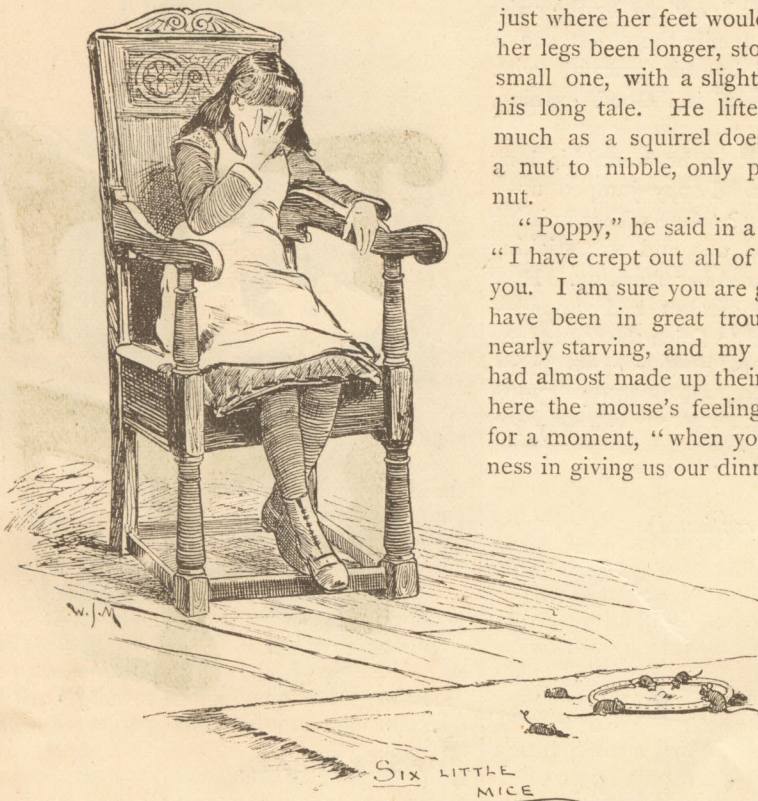
won't get to know me quite well once they sees I'm not a-going to hurt 'em."

She moved her foot a very little, just to try. In an instant, as if by magic, the whole six had disappeared—Poppy could almost have fancied it a dream that they had been there at all!

She went up the area steps again when she had "washed up," as she called it, though, as the things consisted only of one plate and a knife and fork, it was not a long process. There was the hearth to sweep up however, and a lump of coal to be carefully placed so

that it would last till mother came in, and tea had to be got ready; so Poppy felt herself quite a housekeeper. She glanced at the opposite house, but there were no faces at the nursery window; for just then Jack and Bessie were more profitably occupied in discussing their dinner. So Poppy got out her knitting when she came in again, and settled herself in the big arm-chair, wondering how many rounds of her stocking she would be able to get done before mother came home. And then a queer thing happened. A very, *very* soft sound made her look, not up, but down, for the sound came from below. There, just where her feet would have come to had her legs been longer, stood a mouse—a very small one, with a slight twist at the end of his long tale. He lifted his two front paws much as a squirrel does when he is holding a nut to nibble, only poor mousey had no nut.

"Poppy," he said in a clear squeaky voice, "I have crept out all of myself to speak to you. I am sure you are good and kind. We have been in great trouble—we have been nearly starving, and my Papa and Mamma had almost made up their minds to emigrate," here the mouse's feelings choked his voice for a moment, "when you came. Your goodness in giving us our dinner to-day has made



SIX LITTLE
MICE

them think better of it. May we trust to you to take care of us? Will you promise never, never to—to—"

"To set a cat on you?" said Poppy. But a faint squeal from the mouse startled her.

"Don't—don't, I beg of you—don't say the word—I shall die if you say it again."

"Well then, I won't," said Poppy good-naturedly. "And I'll promise you no one shall hurt you, so long as you don't do no mischief to our things. And I'll give you all the scraps I can, though they won't be much. Mother and me's poor folk, though we do live in a fine house—we're only caretaking, you see."

"Thank you, Poppy," said the mouse. "I shall carry the good news home. You may trust us to do no mischief. We have been very well brought up, I assure you. Thank you very much," and he was flitting away when Poppy stopped him.

"What's your name, mouse?" she said.

"Flip," he replied. "I am the eldest of the family. You may know me by the twist in my tail. In our family the eldest son is always distinguished by this graceful twist. We are very proud of it. Good evening, Poppy."

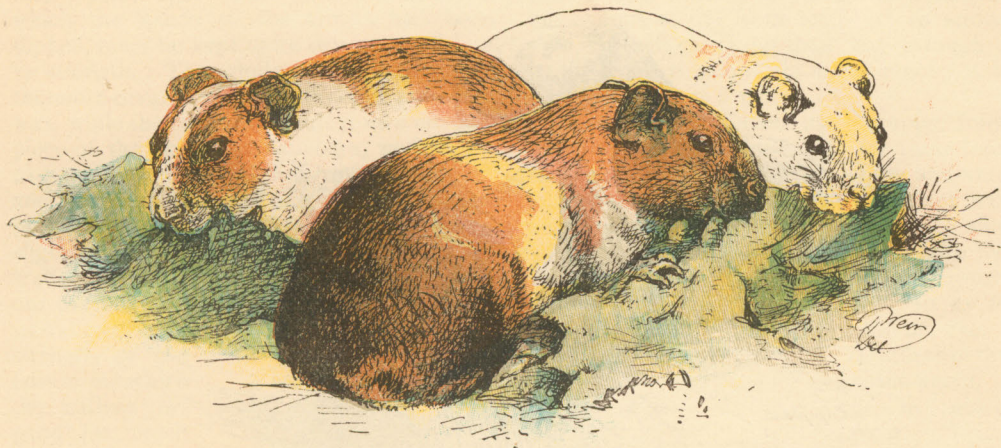
He darted off—but as he went, his long tail touched her feet. Poppy jumped up—had she been asleep? One of her knitting needles had dropped out and was sticking between her slipper and her stocking. How provoking! Several stitches had slipped—she had to work hard to finish the rounds she had set herself before mother came home. How very funny it was about Flip! Could it have been a dream only? Any way *she* would keep her promise.

(To be continued).



W.J.M

FLIP'S APPEAL.



THE ZOO.

BY THE REV. J. G. WOOD.

Illustrated by HARRISON WEIR.

THE GUINEA PIG, CAPYBÂRA, AGOUTI, PACA.

EVERY one knows the Guinea-pig by sight, but every one does not know what the creature really is, and how it obtained its name. I need hardly say that the animal is a rodent, and has nothing in common with the swine, so that it has no claim to the title of pig. Moreover, Guinea is on the West coast of Africa, whereas the animal is a native of South America, being common in Guiana, though it has nothing to do with Guinea. Its right name is the Restless Cavy, and under that name it will be found in the Gardens.

Since it was first brought to England, it has thriven so well that it has become almost as common as the rabbit, and can be kept as easily, all that it wants being plenty of food, and a warm, dry, and sheltered spot in which it can rest.

In G. Sanger's menagerie at Margate, there were last year a number of guinea-pigs which

had made for themselves a set of snug shelters in the ivy which covers the sides of some stone stairs leading up the slopes. They amused themselves by running in and out of their hiding places, and very pretty they looked.

One of the monkeys seemed to think that they were placed in the menagerie for his own amusement, and nothing pleased him so much as being allowed to play with them. He could not be allowed to do so while visitors were in the menagerie, but in the early mornings, before the doors were opened, he was taken out of his cage, and allowed to run about the gardens as he liked. He never tried to escape, but always went off in search of the guinea-pigs. His great amusement was to chase them into their hiding-places and try to catch them by their tails.

He never could understand that guinea-pigs have no tails, and when he caught one, would turn it over and over in search of the tail.

Some years ago, grooms and stablemen had an idea that rats were afraid of the guinea-pig, and dared not live in the same house with it.

So they used to keep guinea-pigs in the stable, hoping that they would drive away the



rats. But after a while it was found out that so far from being afraid of the guinea-pig, the rats were in the habit of killing and eating it, so that it really induced the rats to enter the stables.

No use has as yet been found for the guinea-pig, as its flesh is worthless, and its hairs are so loosely set in its skin, that even the best furriers can make no use of it.

The guinea-pig has plenty of relations, several of which may be seen in the Gardens.

One of the nearest is the Capybára, the largest living rodent. It is from three to four feet in length, and is very short-legged and thick-bodied. Its hair is almost as coarse as the bristles of the swine, and indeed it is altogether so pig-like, that at a little distance it might be easily mistaken for a pig. Its colour is blackish gray, with a little yellow.

As it goes trit-trotting about on its short legs, it looks quite a clumsy animal. But, like the beaver, it belongs more to the water than the land, and as soon as it plunges into water

it becomes quite changed. Its toes are webbed, and by their aid it can swim and dive with great speed and even with grace. It swims very deeply in the water, only allowing the nostrils, eyes and ears to be above the surface. It is a native of South America, and is always to be found on or near the banks of the rivers, mostly hiding among the reeds and other water-plants on which it feeds. The native name of capybára signifies a dweller among grass, and is given to it in consequence of this habit. If it should be suddenly alarmed when on the bank, it gives a short, sharp bark, and plunges into the water, where it feels itself safe. Its chief foe is the jaguar, which lies in wait for it by the river, and suddenly pounces on it when it comes out of the water. The fur, being so coarse, has not been brought into use in Europe.

The natives however find that even the skin of the capybára has its value. Not long before his death, the late Charles Waterton gave me a quiver for poisoned blow-gun arrows which he had brought from Guiana

many years ago. The wourali poison in which the heads of the arrows had been dipped, must be kept quite dry, or it will lose its strength. The whole of the quiver was therefore covered with a thick coating of black wax, while the cover was made from a circular piece of the skin of a capybâra, worked on to the quiver while still wet from the animal, and used with the furry side inwards. When pressed on the mouth of the quiver and then slightly screwed, it effectually kept our the wet and preserved the strength of the poison on which the natives depend for much of their living.

Others though not such near relations of the guinea-pig are the Agoutis of South America, several of which are in the Gardens. The best known is the golden agouti, sometimes called the acouri.

Its fur has a bright golden tinge on the hinder part of the body, the rest of the hair being a sort of speckled gray. The yellow hairs are more than four inches long, the speckled fur being only an inch in length. It is about as large as a hare, and like that animal, has very long hind legs. It does not burrow in the ground, but it has hiding places in which it puts its stores of winter food.

Like the guinea-pig, it is rather a stupid animal, but though it is so gentle that if caught it never tries to bite, it seldom, if ever, shows any love towards its owner, no matter how kindly it may be treated. If it were to

use its teeth in earnest, it would be a dangerous animal, as the front teeth are so strong that they will easily cut their way through a strong wooden door. In consequence it is not often kept as a pet.

The natives of Guiana use the upper front teeth of the acouri as sights for their long blow-guns. These teeth are white, and very much curved. They are fixed with black wax near the butt end of the gun, being set side

by side with the curves uppermost, so as to guide the eye.

The flesh of the golden agouti is not in much favour, being even more dry than that of the hare or rabbit. The natives say that the agouti is fat only when the bamboo blossoms that is to say, when it is forty years old. And as the agouti does not live to half that age, it never can become fat.

Though very common in its own country, it

is not often seen except by those who know where to look for it. It only goes abroad by night, and during the daytime huddles together in parties of some twenty or thirty in number, hiding in the hollow of some fallen and decaying tree, or perhaps in a convenient cleft in rocky ground.

Another of the cavies is the Spotted Cavy or Paca, sometimes called the Labba. It has a heavier head than the agouti, and shorter hind legs. It inhabits Central America, and lives in burrows.



There are always two openings to the burrows, and sometimes three or four. The hunters always go in pairs, and when they have found a burrow, they stop up all the holes except two. One of them then pushes a long stick into one of the holes, while his companion stands at the other entrance, and kills the paca as it tries to escape. If they wish to take the animal alive, they lay a net over the second entrance, just as is done in taking rabbits.

I have already said that the head is very heavy looking. This is due to a most singular growth of the cheek-bone, which, instead of being flat, is double, and forms a kind of bony pouch.

The object of the pouch no one knows, as it is so formed that there is no opening into the mouth, and the animal cannot put anything into it as is the case when cheek-pouches are formed from the skin.

The burrows are so shallow, that if a man walks over one it is nearly sure to give way under his feet. Any district in which the paca lives is therefore even more dangerous for horsemen than if the prairie dog had made its burrows. A horse which is used to the prairie-dog can always direct its steps

in safety, by looking out for the mound at the entrance of the burrow. But when the danger does not lie in the opening of the burrow, which can be seen and avoided, but in the falling in of the roof itself, there is no hope of seeing the perilous spot.

Marshy grounds near rivers are the usual spots chosen by the paca, especially if trees or bushes should grow here and there.

The animal is a terrible enemy to most ground crops, but especially to the sugar-cane, of which it is madly fond, and which it cuts to pieces with its chisel-edged teeth.

The planters,

therefore wage continual war against it, so

that a paca can seldom be seen

within some miles of sugar planta-

tions. The fur is too coarse to be of any

particular value, but the skin, when properly dressed, makes a useful leather. The

flesh is good to eat, but, unlike that of the agouti, is rich and fat.

The paca can swim well, and, unlike the agouti, when it is brought to bay, it will fight fiercely for its life. The paca is about two feet in length, and its colour is brown above with four rows of whitish spots. The whole of the lower surface is white, and the animal seems to take a pride in keeping its fur in the best order.



Paca

(To be continued.)

A DREADFULLY BAD MEMORY.

BY M. BRAMSTON.

"YOU know, mother, I have got such a dreadfully bad memory," said Dolly Keene one day when her mother had been talking to her gravely about the way in which she always forgot everything. To-day, for instance, she had forgotten to put away her tennis racquet; she had left her hat in the hall instead of taking it up to her room; she had left her umbrella at school; she had gone off to afternoon school without putting away the draughts with which she and Cyril had been playing; she had been given three books to put away in the study by her father, and had left them all on the hall table. It was no wonder that nurse said, "It was one person's business to put away things after Miss Dolly;" and that every one in the household was beginning to say, "It is no use giving anything to Dolly to do, she always forgets."



"'A dreadfully bad memory'? You say that, Dolly, as if you had only one leg and said, 'You know, mother, I'm such a dreadful cripple.' If you had only one leg you couldn't walk, and I could not expect it; but I don't think there is anything the matter with your memory except that it wants training and attention: and the sooner you give it that the better."

"But people do have different kinds of memory," said Dolly. "It's quite easy for you to remember things."

"Tolerably, now, because I have learnt. But it is quite as easy for you to remember some things as it is for me. When we had the play at Christmas, you remembered your part as well as any one: and I have never known you forget any treat that was coming."

"No, because one can always remember things that are jolly."

"Perhaps then if you tried to feel that it was 'jolly' to do what you are told, and to try to be helpful, and neat, and everything that is pleasant to see in a little daughter and sister of ten years old, you would remember the things better. Carelessness or forgetfulness really means not thinking enough of helping and pleasing other people. Cyril is much less forgetful than you, and the consequence is that he helps me much more."

Dolly loved her mother very much, in spite of her carelessness, and the tears came into



her eyes, "Mother, I do like to help you," she said.

"Well then, my darling, you must try to train your memory by thinking more of the trouble and annoyance you give when you forget. But do you know, when I was a little girl, I was pretty much as forgetful as you, till I had a lesson which made me see how unkind forgetfulness could be."

"Do tell me," said Dolly, nestling to her mother's side and cheering up.

"Well, I had some little cousins when I was a girl, Annie and Edward, and they lived only about two miles off, so I often used to go and spend the day with them. They had a little Scotch terrier named Flick, which they were very fond of, and so was I; we

used to pretend he was all sorts of things—a bear and a wolf, and even a lion I think. They had a long garden, and then a field with a copse, and in the copse a queer little old summer-house, with a door that you could shut. It smelt musty, and we very seldom thought of going in, the copse was so much nicer. One day we had all been playing I-spy-I, and Flick was so quick in finding out whoever was hidden that when it came to my turn I shut him up in the summer-house, meaning to let him out directly the others found me; but before they found me the nurse came down to say that Uncle Dick had come from London and wanted us all at once, as he had presents for us all. He was my uncle as well as Annie's and Edward's, and we were all very fond of him. So we all rushed off to the house. I utterly forgot poor Flick, and the others never thought that I should have shut him up in that nasty summer-house; and before we had well done looking over our presents and talking about them, somebody came to fetch me home; and I never thought of Flick at all. Uncle Dick came to stay with us, and I did not see any one from the Lodge, where Annie and Edward lived, for three days. In the afternoon of the third day Uncle Dick, who had been over to the Lodge, came back and said, 'They're in an awful state of mind there, they've lost the dog, and they think he must have been stolen. There were some tramps hanging about the day he was missed. The children are frightfully woe-begone.'

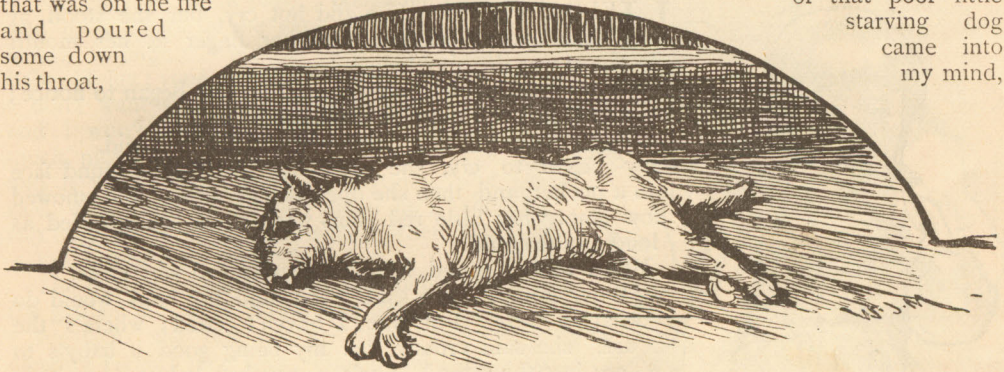
"Then it suddenly came over me that I had shut Flick up in the summer-house in the copse, and perhaps he was there, starving to death. I burst out crying and said, 'Oh, Uncle Dick, I believe I know where he is! Oh, I must go and let him out before he gets starved to death!'

"We had no carriage, and it might have been difficult to get me over those two miles if it had not been for Uncle Dick's kindness, but he said he would walk over with me if I liked; and so we set off, and I led him straight to the summer-house in the copse,

before going into the house. And there, do you know, was poor Flick—so weak he could not crawl to our feet, but just able to wag his tail against the floor to tell us how glad he was we were come. Uncle Dick took him up in his arms, and we carried him first into the kitchen to see if he was too far gone to lap some milk. He refused the milk, and I felt sure he was dying: but the cook was a sensible woman, and she took some broth that was on the fire and poured some down his throat,

Annie and Edward were, when they found I had shut the poor little dog up there and forgotten him. Uncle Dick, who was very good-natured, interceded for me, and said how I had done my best to undo my fault: and as Flick really got well, it was not so difficult for them to forgive me. But that made me determine, Dolly, to try to conquer my forgetfulness; and when

I was told to remember anything, the thought of that poor little starving dog came into my mind,



‘REMEMBER FLICK!’

and then he began to revive, and by and by he could take some by himself. Oh, Dolly, I can remember now the awful terror I had when I thought he was dying, and that it was all my carelessness and forgetfulness that had starved the poor little dog to death!”

“But he didn’t die, did he?”

“No; he quite recovered, and lived to a good old age. But you may imagine how displeased my aunt and uncle, and

and made me resolve not to forget again. I felt then that forgetfulness was really selfishness, not thinking enough about the trouble we give to others; and I used to say to myself, ‘Remember Flick!’ and so I learnt to train my memory from a bad one to a good one.”

“And I will too,” said Dolly. “And when you think I shall forget anything, mother, you must say to me, ‘Remember Flick!’”

HELGA'S PLAN

By KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

CHAPTER I.



HELGA was sad. She did not cry, but she stood at the nursery window with her finger in her mouth while Nurse was dressing baby.

Baby was six months old now. She sat up and began to notice ; Nurse told Helga she must be extra good.

"Your new sister will take pattern by you," Nurse said.

Baby began to cry, she drew her pretty little round face into a pucker, and then she opened her mouth and showed how empty her little red gums were, while she squalled as loud as she could.

Helga turned round, her blue eyes looked very cross.

"Why, Nurse," she said, "you told me baby would do what I did. I'm sure I haven't cried ; where's the use," she said crossly, "of my being good if baby's to cry just the same ? She's a naughty baby ; very, very naughty ; there's no use in kissing her and calling her a sweet darling when she's not ; she isn't sweet, she's horrid !"

Helga's face was very red and she stamped her feet, for Nurse was cossetting baby, petting her just as if she were good.

"Hush, Miss Helga," Nurse said, "baby cries because she is only a baby ; she won't cry when she's bigger."

Nurse was bending over the little one, busy in fastening baby's frock, and then in putting on its little shoes.

Helga turned angrily away. "I wish I was baby," she thought. "She may cry, and I mayn't ; I want to cry ever so much. I want Cecil ; Cecil makes plays for me, and her too ; and now just because she's five Cecil's got to join the school-room every morning to do lessons with mother, and it will be time to go out when she's done. Oh, dear, oh, dear —it's horrid to have nobody to play with."

Helga's sigh sounded like a sob. Life was very miserable to her this morning.

"When baby was given mother for a present," her thoughts went on, "why didn't mother say 'No, thank you' We did very well without baby; Nurse can hardly ever play with me now. Oh—" She burst into a fit of sobs, and tears rolled suddenly down her cheeks. She was hidden by the curtain that hung across the old-fashioned window recess, and Nurse was so busy putting on baby's outdoor wraps that she had no eyes for the sobbing little girl just then.

"There's no use in baby." Helga felt more and more angry as she gave way to her unloving feelings. "Mother said 'It's your baby, Helga; your own dear little playfellow.' I don't want such a stupid little playfellow, and I won't love her, the kitten's ever so much nicer, it can run races, and it begs and it plays. Baby can't do anything," she said, with a curl of her very small lip; "she can only go to sleep, and scream when she wakes, horrid little thing!"

The nursemaid came in to take baby into the garden, and while Nurse was giving her a message, she did not see how very naughty Helga's face was. Helga had been the youngest for nearly four years, and had been much spoiled by her three sisters and her brother Frank.

The nursery door was flung open, and in came Cecil with flushed cheeks. "Oh, Helga," she said, in a bright, cheery voice as she pushed her long fair hair over her shoulder, "I like lessons ever so much, and I've learned a lot; and when we come in I'm going to teach you, you'll like that,

won't you, dear?" She stooped to kiss her little sister. "Why, what's the matter?" she said, as she caught sight of Helga's purple cheeks still wet with tears.

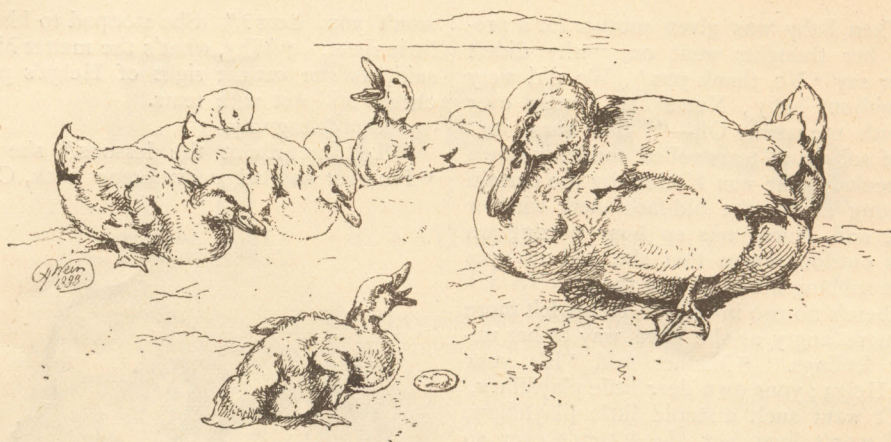
Helga felt guilty.

"Tell me about the lessons," she said. "I'm ever so glad you've come back, Cecil."

(To be continued.)



Helga felt guilty —



QUACK, QUACK!

BY ASCOTT R. HOPE.

"QUACK, quack!" piped out one of the brood of ducklings to announce that it had found something remarkable while scraping about in the mud round the pond.

It was a new silver shilling which shone white and bright when picked out of the dirt where it had lain hidden.

"Drop it this moment!" exclaimed the mamma duck, waddling up to see what might be the matter. "You will only spoil your bill upon such rubbish. This is a striking example of what I have so often told you: 'All is not good to eat that glitters.'"

"But, mamma, it is so pretty!"

"Don't judge by appearances, my dears. Quack, quack! That's the way men let themselves be cheated. But I am a duck of experience and know what's what. Leave the useless thing to be picked up by one of the foolish animals who call themselves our masters."

"Are men not so wise and great as they look, then?" asked one of the young ducks.

"H'm, great enough, if that was all. Ill

weeds grow apace. But they are poor creatures—afraid to wet their feet! When I see them strutting about as if all the parish belonged to them, I just turn up my bill and say, *Quack, quack!*"

The little band of ducklings listened with reverence to their parent, who showed them a pattern of such proper pride.

"Yes, my loves," she continued, "I hope you will always be thankful that you have been born ducks and learned in your youth the use of nice clean mud and water. Men, while they are little at least, actually don't like to be washed—what do you think of that?"

All the brood uttered a quack of astonishment.

"How do they spend their time, mamma, dear?"

"Why, they stay in their coops, fattening themselves, and quack quacking all sorts of nonsense about nothing. Sometimes you see them hopping about when they can find any dry places. But they are afraid of the weather. They say, 'It's too wet to go out,' cackled the old duck, trying to imitate the mincing tones of a young lady. "Then of course, they fall ill and have to send for a kind of people called doctors, who make them stay in bed all day and

give them nasty things to eat and drink. *Quack, quack!*"

"How dreadful," cried the ducklings in chorus. "And are the poor things not able to waddle about and pick up worms and slugs for themselves?"

"Oh, they are a helpless set! Remember always the proverb I have so often taught you: Fine feathers don't make fine birds. Do you know that they actually take off those feathers of theirs every night, and put them on again in the morning?"

"What a funny habit!" said one of the ducklings.

"What a waste of time!" remarked another who, taking after his mother, was the most serious of the brood.

"What do they get to eat then, mamma?" asked a third.

"*Quack, quack!*" said the duck, ruffling her feathers. "That is an unpleasant subject, my beloved ones. They eat a great deal too much of all sorts of things, which is another reason for their being so delicate. They eat, for instance, apple sauce, green peas, and stuffing. And I am sorry to say they even eat us."

"Oh, dear!" twittered the ducklings; "will they eat you, mamma?"

"I think not," quoth the old duck, chuckling to herself. "I am too tough for them. But this is a life of dangers and uncertainties. My first and last counsel to you is to distrust the whole race."

"We are so glad you have warned us," said the ducklings, much impressed.

"Oh, yes! They are a sly, selfish set, and most improper companions for any respectable duck. They pretend to be so fond of us, and give us corn to make us fat; then they take our eggs, and send us to market—and worse things still, as you will learn too soon, my precious children. I saw our mistress shelling peas this very morning," muttered the duck to herself. "Oh! it's a hard world for harmless birds like us, and you may well be thankful that you have one prudent parent to warn you against foxes,

men, and all other beasts of prey. As for your poor papa, he has no more sense

than a goose, though he gives himself as fine airs as any turkey; but I flatter myself you will come

to no mischief under my wing. So now for our morning swimming

lesson!"

At this moment, the farmer's wife appeared at the yard door, hiding a knife with one hand under her apron, while she stretched out the other to the ducklings, crying "Ducky ducky, darlings, come and be killed!"

"Run, run," gasped the mother duck, waddling off into the pond at her best pace, and the whole brood, crowding round her, took to the water in a flurry, and answered the old woman's endearments with a chorus of *quack, quack!*





THE BLACKBIRD'S NEST.

By JANE WALLACE.

"LINDZ, Lindz! Don't you hear the church bells ringing? Come quick, or we shall be late."

"I'm just coming," shouted a cheery voice from the garden, and a little boy of five darted across the lawn.

It was a lovely spring morning of sunshine. All the leaves were full out on the trees and shrubs, the old-fashioned garden was gay with hepaticas and daffodils. It was delightful to breathe the balmy air that came in at the open windows. All was so hushed and harmonious and peaceful, as it only is near a town on a Sunday morning.

But all at once there was such a piteous cry. Could this be the little boy in tears on such a day as this!

"I only peeped into the blackbird's nest," he burst into the room; "and put out my hand with some crumbs as a treat, when all the little birds flew out and gave me such a fright."

"If that is all," said his mother, "it only served you right."

"But it isn't all," sobbed the little boy. "They couldn't fly, and the horrid cat ran off with one before my eyes, and the blackbird thought I had the rest, and flew after me all the way up the avenue with such a sad cry. Oh I can't bear it."

The poor little fellow was truly distressed, and never forgot the lesson we are so apt to forget, to

LET WELL ALONE.

W.J.M



TWICE WOUNDED.

By ALICE BISHOP.



TOM, don't you remember, father told you not to cut wood on the table?"

"Oh, bother! how glad I shall be when I'm a man, then I can do what I like, and not be obliged to obey any one," and Tom gave a dissatisfied grunt as he shut his knife.

Grandmother looked up from her knitting.

"What do you mean to be then, Tom?"

"To be, Granny? Why, you know, a soldier to be sure!" he replied, presenting arms at once with the stick he had been cutting.

"So I thought. Well, then, you will find the first thing to be learned and practised in the army is obedience. Ask Grandfather."

"Grandfather," said Elsie, hastily pushing the *Times* on one side and taking her Grandfather by the hand "do tell us about obedience and the army."

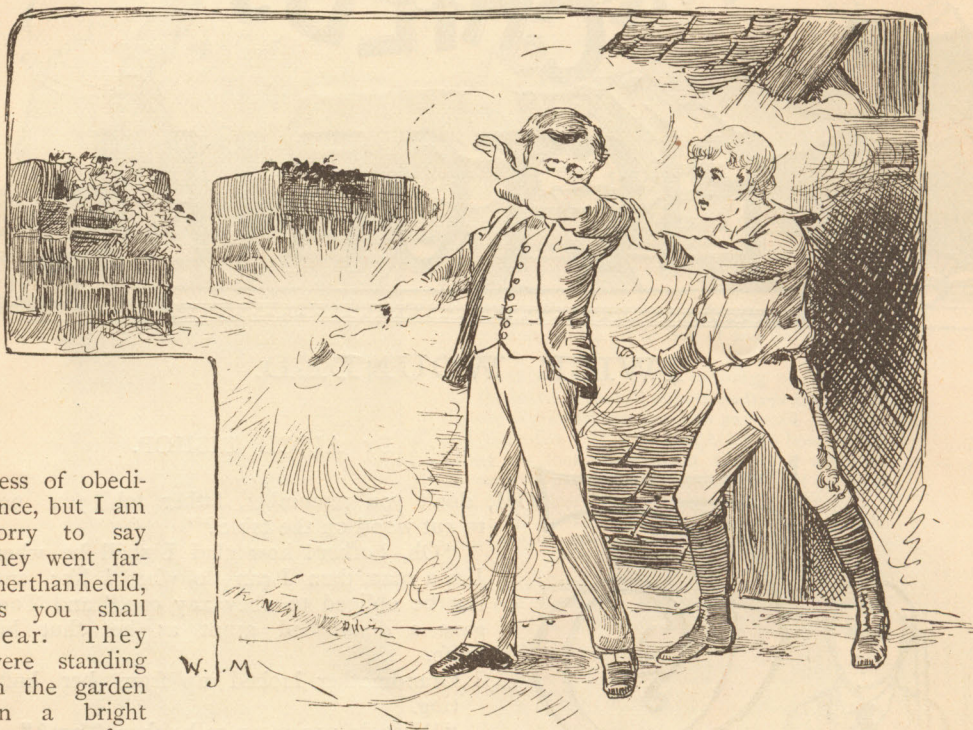
"Yes, please, let's hear something about soldiers," cried Tom, planting himself in a military attitude by his Grandfather's chair.

Granny put down her work for a moment and smiled at Grandfather, who folded up his paper, took Elsie on his knee, and began the following story:—

"Many years ago, children, two brothers thought and spoke as Tom did just now about the irksome-



W.J.M



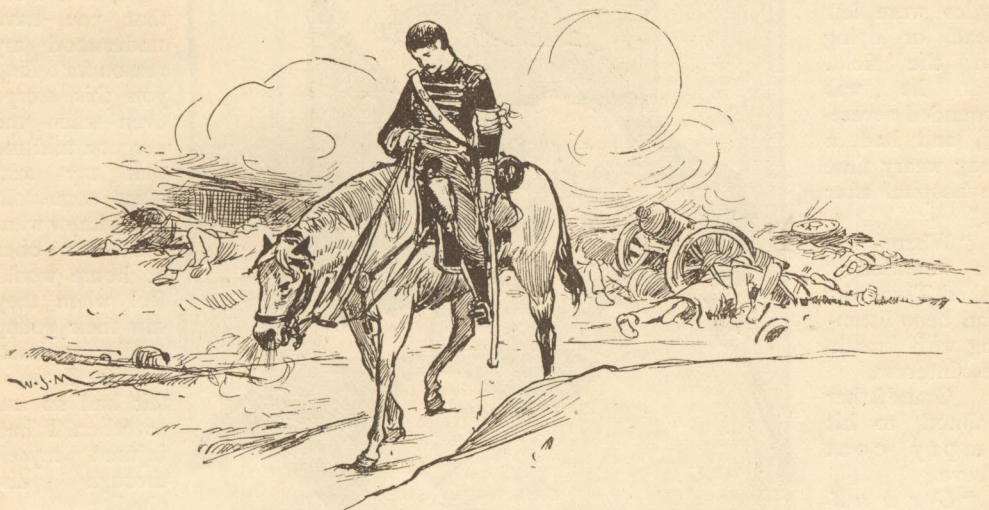
ness of obedience, but I am sorry to say they went farther than he did, as you shall hear. They were standing in the garden on a bright summer afternoon, discussing a most interesting topic. 'Anyhow, if you're a muff,' said Frank, the elder of the two boys, 'I'm not, so I shall go and buy some now, and have all the fun to myself.' 'I'm *not* a muff,' retorted Geoffrey angrily, 'only Father did forbid us to play with gunpowder so *very* strictly, you know, Frank.' 'All right, Molly, I don't care if he did. I must lay a train on the roof and I will,' and off he ran towards the gate. Geoffrey hesitated, and then overcome by the last taunt of being called 'Molly,' he followed his brother. In half-an-hour they were on the roof of the old house, hidden from sight by the ivy-clad gables, and Frank was laying a train of gunpowder along the leaden gutter. Geoffrey's delight, when they had ignited it, was great, but it did not satisfy impetuous Frank. 'Here, out of the way,'

he said, 'I'll put some more on, out of the bag,' and he proceeded to throw a handful of powder on to the lighted train. The result may be guessed. A quick flare, a yell from both boys followed by louder cries from Frank, as he held up his hand which was terribly wounded and bleeding profusely. Geoffrey turned very white, but hurriedly crawled in at the attic window, helped his brother to follow, and then ran to fetch their Mother.

"You can imagine the distress she felt when she first saw the poor wounded hand, but I believe that though the boy's Father was sorry for Frank's sufferings, he thought that this would be a useful lesson to him, and that in the future he would be more obedient. For some time the wounded boy had to lie in bed; sometimes it was all he could do to

keep back the tears, the pain was so bad, and somehow mother's tender words and pitying voice, though they soothed him, yet only made him feel the more, how richly he deserved the punishment which his reckless disobedience had brought upon him. He never forgot one talk he had with her upon the subject; 'Yes, dear,' she said, smoothing his hair back with that peculiarly caressing touch which is only given to mothers, 'if, when you grow up, you mean to be a soldier like father, the memory of this wound will stand you in good stead, and even if you do not

took off his spectacles—then he went on—'Now comes the second part of the story. Fifteen years had passed since Frank's accident, and this time I will show him to you in another place, and under very different circumstances. Instead of the peaceful old garden in Kent, which in summer was always bright with flowers and gay with the song of birds, there he is at the head of his men on the field of battle. No birds now, only the roar of the cannon echoed round him and rumbled like thunder among the hills, and the valley was hidden from his



go into the army, Frank, never forget that we must all obey and fear God as well as love Him.'

"'I'll never forget, mother,' replied the boy, as he flung his uninjured arm round her neck and hugged her—and, children, do you know, though many years have rolled away since that day and the dear mother has been long in Heaven, Frank can still feel the touch of her lips on his forehead, and hear the murmured 'God bless my dear boy,' which she breathed over him as she kissed him." Grandfather paused for a moment, and

view by thick smoke. He looked round at the fine brave fellows behind him and wondered how many of them, now so full of life and vigour, would, before night fell, be either writhing in anguish or still in death.

"'Charge!' The order came clear and distinct to Frank's ears, yet for a moment he could hardly believe they told him aright, for the smoke had cleared away now, and, as he looked at the vast masses of the enemy before him, he could scarcely imagine that, with only that small force, they must set forth against them. Still, the word was clear enough, and

a soldier should fear nothing but disobeying his chief, so, waving his sword, he echoed the order, and rode down the hill, his men galloping after him at full speed.

"I will not attempt to describe the desperate fight which followed, for to do so would be impossible, but one thing I can tell you, that God watched over Frank that day and brought him safe out of the furious combat, although most of his brave comrades were left dead or dying on the field. But he was wounded severely, and had a long weary time in hospital after it."

"Where was he wounded?" asked Tom, who had been listening with breathless interest.

Grandfather pointed to his empty coat sleeve.

"Grandfather," both the children cried, "you have been telling us about yourself!"

"Yes, little ones, I have, and here is the scar of the wound made by the gunpowder through my disobedience. It is curious that this hand should be left me, except perhaps I wanted something to remind me all my life long of the necessity of discipline." Grand-

father held out his hand as he spoke, and Elsie immediately kissed the scar lovingly.

"Dear little maid," he said, stroking her long fair hair, "you are fond of your one-armed Grandfather then?"

A hug was her only answer, but Tom remarked in rather a choky voice, "The second wound was not so bad to bear as the first, was it?"

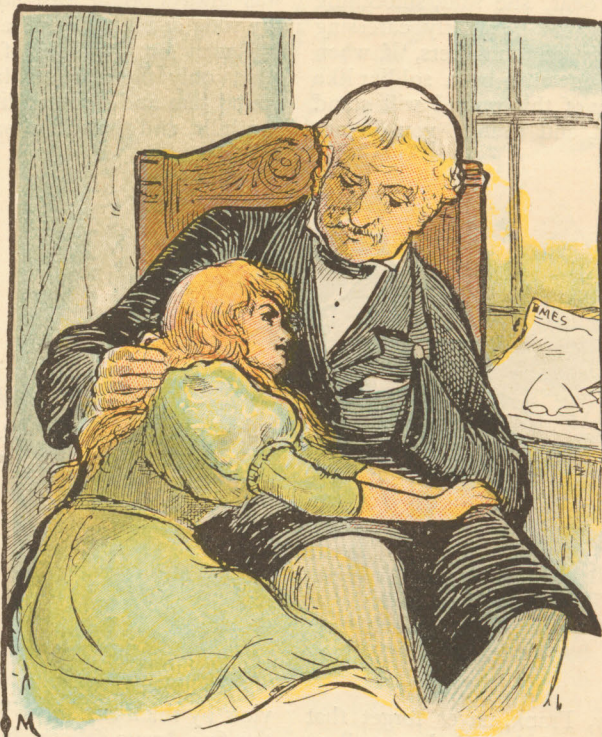
"No, my boy, you are quite right, and I see that you have understood my reason for telling you this story: even when the surgeon told me that my arm must come off, and I knew what the dear ones at home would feel when they saw their young soldier maimed for life, I never felt half so sad as when I had injured myself through disobedience.

"And when I got home, somehow they didn't seem to

mind my one arm," added Grandfather, after a pause, "did they, Granny?"

But Granny could only shake her head.

"Why, Granny, you're *not crying*?" said Elsie,—but do you know, children, I think she was, though I feel sure that her tears were not caused by sorrow.



A HOUSE TO LET.

BY MRS. MOLESWORTH.

CHAPTER IV.

CASTLES IN THE AIR.

WHEN Jack and Bessie came into the day-nursery for their breakfast the next morning they ran to the window to look out. Yes, there at the top of the area steps, looking up and down the street, just like the day before, stood Poppy. It was a bright morning though rather chilly—the sun was in Poppy's eyes, and she did not see the two faces pressed against the window pane, till a tinkling sort of knocking made her look up. Jack was drumming on the glass with a tin trumpet. Then Poppy's face broke out in smiles. She nodded and they nodded. Next a sudden idea struck her. She held out all the fingers of one hand and the forefinger of the other, bobbing them down in turns to show she was counting.

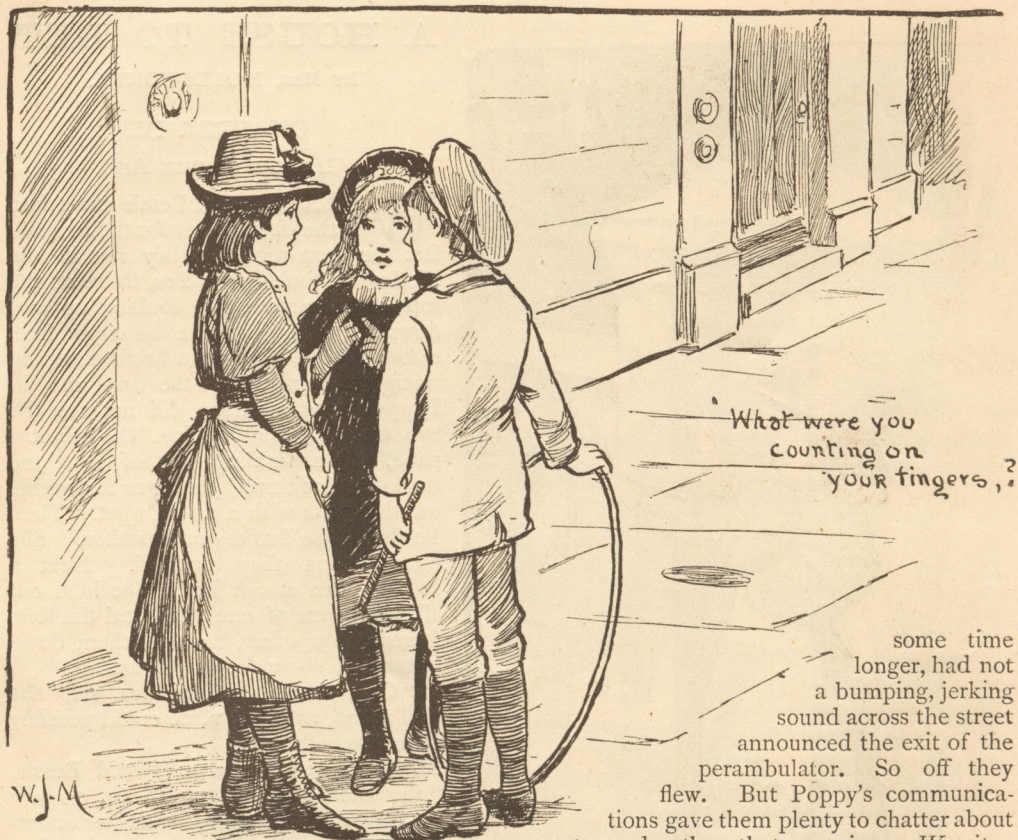
"One, two, three, four, five, six," she said aloud, as if her voice could possibly have reached them.

"What can she mean?" said Bessie, "she keeps counting up to six, do you see, Jack? I'll try to make her understand that we'll talk to her again when we go out." And a series of very funny signs and pointings ensued, which unfortunately Poppy could *not* understand at all.

But she kept her eye on the opposite house all the morning, and she was at her post when at last the door opened and the two children ran out. The nurses were getting the little ones down stairs and there was always some delay with the perambulator, so Jack and Bessie had time for a word or two.

"What *were* you counting on your fingers this morning, Poppy?" asked Bessie.





"It were the mice, miss. You would have laughed. There's six on 'em, all six at onst. You never did see nothing so funny. And I've promised as I'll give 'em scraps—poor things, they've been all but starved."

"You've promised," repeated Bessie. "But how could you promise *mice* anything?"

Poppy got rather red.

"Oh, miss, don't you laugh at me now, but p'raps I were dreaming. All the same I promised," and she related Flip's visit the evening before.

Jack and Bessie were delighted. They would have stayed talking to Poppy for

some time longer, had not a bumping, jerking sound across the street announced the exit of the perambulator. So off they flew. But Poppy's communications gave them plenty to chatter about to each other that morning. Was it a dream, or could it be that mice could *sometimes* speak?

From this time forward not many days passed on which they did not manage to have a little conversation with Poppy. Their nurse noticed her standing at the gate once or twice but without paying particular attention, and as the child bobbed a courtesy and a pleasant good morning, she was quite satisfied when Bessie spoke of her as "the caretaker's little girl opposite." Not that Jack and Bessie had the least idea of concealing their acquaintance with Poppy. If any one had asked about it they would have told all there was to tell, but no one happened to do so.

Their mother was even more busy than usual just then, as the big sisters were without a governess, and she had herself to help them in preparing their lessons for their various masters.

Poppy's mother seemed to be in great request just then. "It never rains but it pours," says the proverb, and now that she was living rent free she had more "charing," than during all the past hard winter. When she came home in the evening she was often too tired to tell her little daughter the stories that had always been the child's favourites—of "when poor father was alive and we lived in the

country." "The country," was Poppy's fairyland; she had never seen it that she could remember, she tried to picture it to herself from her mother's descriptions, to be sure, but still, as the good woman told her, "no words could give the *feel* of it." And they used to build castles in the air together of a day when they should have saved enough to go for some hours by one of the cheap excursions they saw posters about at the railway stations, "right down into the real country."

But lately the story-telling had been on Poppy's side much more than on her mother's. The poor woman was often so tired now that she liked better to listen than to talk, and Poppy was very pleased to retail all her conversations with Jack and Bessie and she was also very fond of chattering to her mother about Flip and his brothers and sisters.

"What a fancy the child has, to be sure," her mother would say with a smile. "How

I do wish I could show you some of the pretty wild creatures as lives in the woods! The squirrels with their long tails, and the rabbits a scuttling about, and the birds. When I was as little as you,



"WOULDN'T I LIKE TO SEE THEM!"
SAID POPPY.

Poppy, I used to know 'em all by sight and by sound you might say—you've no notion what a lot of kinds of birds there was down our way."

"Wouldn't I like to see them!" said Poppy. "I do like alive things, mother. I'd rather a deal have the mice running about than nothing stirring when you're out. And I do believe as the little one with the twisty tail as I was telling you of, is getting to know me. I always puts some crumbs for 'em at the same place, and now they'll come close to my foot."

"I can't say as

you. And if it was a dream, there's dreams as is true. Oh, mother, you'll never get a cat."

Poppy looked ready to cry. But her mother comforted her by saying she had no wish to get a cat, "cats was great worries and took a deal of milk," there was no need for Poppy to work herself up.

Some one else was very glad to hear what



FATHER BRIGHT-EYES WAS
PEEPING OUT,

I'm partial to mice," said Poppy's mother. "Still, I don't suppose they can do much harm here in this empty house. If I thought they were mischievous, Poppy, I'd have to get a cat."

"Oh, mother," almost screamed Poppy. "you'd never go for to do that! They'll do no mischief—you may be sure. Flip promised—you remember, mother, I told

Poppy's mother said. Father Bright-eyes was peeping out of the cupboard, listening. Things had been better of late, for though the fare was certainly not as good as in the old days, the scraps which Poppy provided were much to be preferred to sawdust and oilcloth. And then even if there were not much, at least it could be eaten in peace!

(To be continued.)



THE ZOO.

BY THE REV. J. G. WOOD.

Illustrated by HARRISON WEIR.

OXEN.—ZEBU.

NOW we come to a different set of animals.

All those which we have already seen have had either nails or claws at the end of their toes. Those which we are about to see have hoofs instead of nails, or claws, and those hoofs are used only for walking. There are never more than four hoofs in any of these animals, and in many of them only two hoofs touch the ground, the other two being small and not used for walking.

The greater number of them are called Ruminants, or cud-chewers, from the way in which they eat and digest their food. Most of them have no teeth in the front of the upper jaw, a sort of bone-like plate taking their place. Such ruminants therefore, cannot bite the grass into short lengths as the horse does, but can only tear it by pressing the grass between the front teeth of the lower jaw, and the hard plate of the upper jaw.

Stand near a cow as she grazes, and you will see that she tears off the grass with a

peculiar jerk of the head, the sound of the torn grass being heard at some distance. No such sound is heard when a horse or ass feeds in the same field. After grazing for a while the cow lies down, and then begins to chew the cud.

Get close to a cow when she is chewing the cud, and you will see her give a sort of gulp, when a lump runs up her throat and into her mouth. Then she chews the lump (which is called the cud) for a while and then swallows it. After waiting for a few moments, she forces, another cud up her throat and so goes on until she has finished the whole of her feed.

Let us now see what this process means, taking the cow as an example of all the ruminants.

She has four stomachs instead of one, or rather, her stomach is divided into four chambers. The first is called the paunch, and may be compared to the hall, or waiting room of a large house. As fast as the cow swallows the grass she passes it into the paunch, and puts it aside until she is ready to chew the cud. Being only torn and very slightly crushed in the teeth, the grass is not fit to be digested.

When the cow lies down, she allows a little of the food to pass into the second

chamber, the walls of which are divided into a number of cells looking very much like those of a honeycomb. In these cells the bruised grass is made up into the ball which is called the cud, and then forced into the mouth, where it is thoroughly chewed. When swallowed for the second time, the food passes by the first and second chambers, and goes into the third, the walls of which are lined with soft plates instead of cells. There it remains for a little time, and lastly passes into the fourth chamber, where digestion is finished.

The first of them is the Zebu of India, which can be easily known by the strange looking hump on its shoulders. The zebu is of various sizes, some being as large as our prize oxen, while others are scarcely larger than a Newfoundland-dog.

In India it is used for various purposes. In this country, where time is valuable even to those who do not need to earn their living, we should be rather surprised to see a gentleman's carriage drawn by oxen. But in the East, where time is counted as nothing,



Most of the ruminants are furnished with horns, some, such as those of the deer tribe, being solid made of bony matter, and shed and renewed every year; while others, like those of the oxen, sheep and antelopes, are hollow, made of horny matter set on a pair of bony "cores", and with one exception, remaining on the head during the whole of life.

Let us now take some of the most important ruminants in the Gardens, and begin with the ox tribe.

We need not trouble ourselves about our own cattle; but will look at some of the ox tribe that belong to other countries.

some of the most splendid carriages in the world are drawn by the zebu, although its pace is seldom more than three miles an hour, so that many Englishmen on foot can easily beat an Indian ox-carriage without going beyond a walking pace.

Some of my readers may remember the splendid Indian carriages in the late Colonial Exhibition. They were, even to their carved wheels, overlaid with silver-plates, while the animals who drew them were completely hidden in silk, silver and gold, even the horns of the oxen being gilt and polished.

The zebu is also used for the plough, just as oxen were used in England when I was

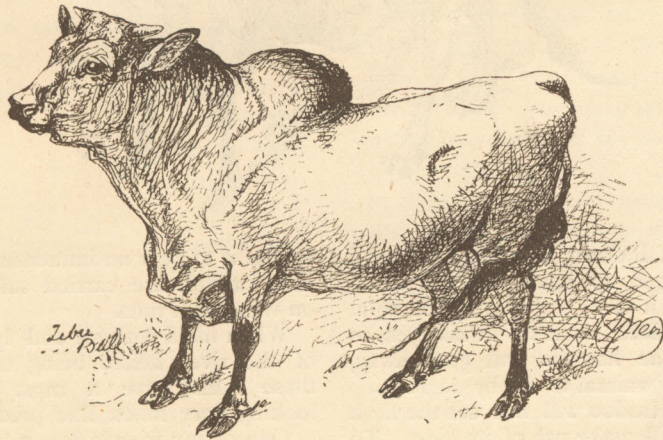
a little boy, and are still used in the United States. In country districts of the States, ox-carts are still used instead of carriages drawn by horses. Sometimes the zebu is used for riding purposes, and is often employed as a pack animal, especially in taking bales of cotton to the sea-ports.

In some parts of India, the cow is thought to be a sacred animal, so that if a man can only hold in his hand a cow's tail when he dies, he is sure to go to heaven at once, no matter how wicked he may have been all

giving way to them, and they think nothing of lying down to chew the cud in the middle of a narrow street, stopping all traffic until they choose to get up again.

As for killing a cow or eating its flesh, no words can express a Hindoo's horror of so dreadful a sin, the murder of a man being a mere nothing when compared with the slaughter of a cow.

We might therefore think that the Hindoo would be very kind to his oxen, whereas no one can be more cruel, and if any English



his life. If a man should be unlucky enough to lose his caste, none of his friends dares to touch him or anything which he has touched, or to be under the same roof with him. He can only be made fit to meet them by going through a number of strange rites, one of which consists in living in a cow-shed for a certain number of days.

Those who have visited India have always been struck with the sacred bulls, which are allowed to wander about the streets and do as they like. They will go into the markets and eat the best fruits and herbs. They flesh their way among the crowd, every one

drover were to treat our cattle as the Hindoo treats the zebu, he would be at once sent to prison. Before he goes to work in the morning, he will pray to his half-starved zebu, and then harness it to a cart and begin to load it. If the load be too heavy for the animal, he will never think of taking any of it off, but will only beat the animal the harder.

If blows cannot force it on, he will twist its tail until the bones are broken or torn asunder, and it is said that it is hardly possible to find a field-zebu with a perfect tail. He will even throw pepper in its eyes, to make it move on, and if it should, as some-



times happens, fall down in a quagmire, and be unable to get up again, he will never think of killing it so as to put it out of pain. That would indeed be a sin in his eyes, so he takes off the harness and goes away, leaving the poor animal to die by degrees.

Though the Hindoo will not eat the flesh of the ox, he will make use of its hide. To our eyes one of the oddest uses to which he puts the skin is that of acting as a raft when he wants to cross a river.

Having taken off the skin, and cut off the head where it joins the neck, and the legs at the knees and hocks, he sews the skin together again while it is still wet, so that when it is dry, it is air-tight. He leaves one of the legs unsewn at the end, so as to make a tube through which he can fill the skin with air. When this is done, and the tube tied up so as to prevent the air from escaping, the skin floats lightly on water, and will sustain a heavy weight. Four of these skins tied under the corners of a raft will

enable it to bear an immense weight, so that even cannon are carried safely across rivers on these skin rafts.

When filled with air and lying by the side of the river before being tied to the raft, these skins have a most absurd aspect, looking very much like prize pigs.

One of my friends has a number of large photographs of native scenes, and among them are several which show the use of the "mussucks" as these skins are called. There is also before me a print showing Lord Elgin, when Governor-General of India, crossing a river by means of mussucks. Several mussucks have been tied together, and upon them is a light raft on which are seated Lord Elgin and two ladies. Four or five natives are supporting themselves on the mussucks and guiding the raft with short paddles. Horses are also being swum across the river, each horse being guided by a groom supporting himself on a mussuck with one hand and holding the horse with the other.

(To be continued.)

HELGA'S PLAN.

By KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

CHAPTER II.

"NURSE," Cecil said next morning, "you mustn't call Helga a baby she can learn lessons just as well as I can. I think she's quite clever."

"That's all right," Nurse said; then as Cecil left the nursery, she said to Helga,

"You will be able to teach baby, dear."

Helga had gone to the window again, but Cecil's praise had given her fresh thoughts. She had found the new game of teaching better than any of the old ones, and she felt ready to

take Nurse's advice. She turned round a smiling, cheerful face. "Then you'll have to

teach baby not to cry," she said; "she can't hear me if she cries, Nurse."

Baby did not cry this morning, and Helga stood watching while Nurse finished dressing her little sister. She thought baby was certainly much prettier than the kitten, and she laughed out merrily when Nurse played with her.

Helga put her little head on one side and stood thinking. Baby could not learn her letters as she had yesterday, but she certainly must be able to learn something.

Presently Nurse put baby in her cradle, while she began to fold up her night-clothes.

Helga's face became very rosy as she went closer and looked at her little sister—a lump came in her throat, it seemed as if all her naughty, unloving thoughts about the baby were choking her. She bent down over the cradle, and the little one laughed and crowed with glee, it stretched out its arms and kicked with delight.

"See how baby loves you," Nurse said; and Helga's cheeks grew still hotter as she remembered the naughty words she had said in her heart about this dear, helpless little sister. She kissed her, and baby cried out with pleasure and tugged at Helga's hair.

"You are a sweet then, and no one shall say you're not," Helga said as she stroked the soft round cheeks and tickled baby's chin. "Mother says you're my own, own baby, and

I've got a plan for you, precious. Don't listen, Nurse dear. I want to have a secret plan with baby."

"All right," Nurse said; but she did



HELGA STOOD WATCHING

not stop her ears, and as Helga went on speaking out loud Nurse may have heard her.

"Baby, dear, please listen;" and as baby stared and opened its mouth, it was plain that it did listen, for babies are much cleverer than they seem to be. "I've got to teach you lessons, darling, but you see you can't learn the alphabet till you can speak, can you, darling?"

Baby gave a shrill cry and kicked vigorously.

"You clever darling, you can speak your own way." Here Helga kissed the baby rapturously.

"Take care, dear," said Nurse, "or you'll perhaps smother her."

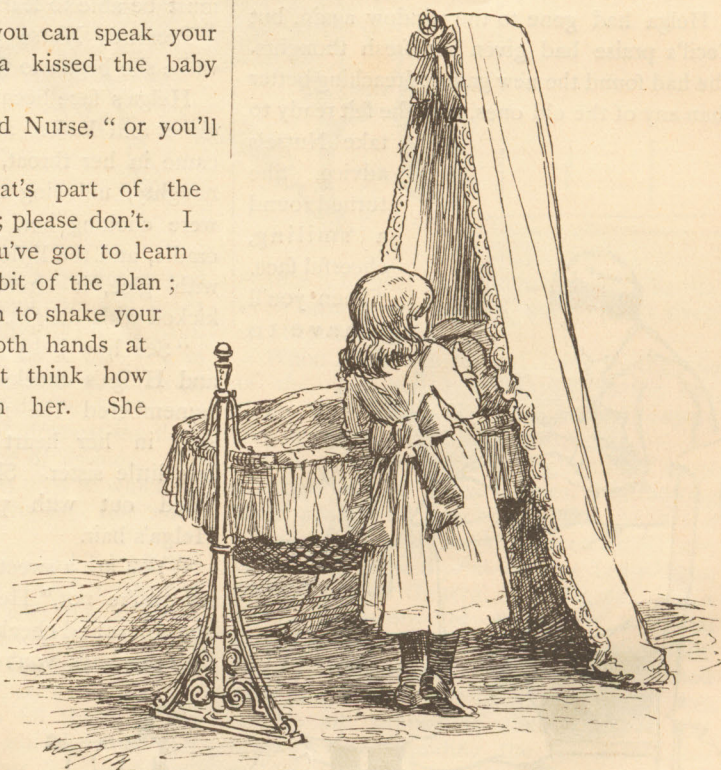
"Oh, no, Nurse, that's part of the secret; now don't listen; please don't. I say, baby dear, first you've got to learn to kiss—that's the first bit of the plan; and next you must learn to shake your hand like this—not both hands at once. Nurse, you can't think how difficult it is to teach her. She gets my fingers tight, and see, she won't let this one go, precious darling!"

The door opened and Cecil came in.

"I'm so sorry, dear," she said as she kissed Helga, "but mother let me stay to look at pictures because she said I had been a good little pupil."

Helga's blue eyes opened widely with wonder.

"It seems as if you had been ever so much quicker than yesterday," she said; "why I haven't finished teaching baby, you can't think what a good little pupil she is!"



THE BAT.

BY MRS. WALLACE.

"YOU children ought all to go out for a run," said Papa. "Try if you can go to the top of the monument and back again before it is dark."

"All right," said Andrew, the big boy of the party of six, three of whom were girls, "six miles in two hours and a half."

Off they started along the crisp roads glittering in a Christmas sun. A merry party as they trot along laughing and chatting.

The top of the monument was soon reached; a fine view they had of the distant hills and their snowy tops, and the sun like a ball of fire setting behind them.

But they must not linger, or their wager would be lost! Andrew went down the winding stair of the tower first and warned the others to hold on by the wall as the steps were worn.

at once he shouted to them to stop. He had put his hand on something soft on the damp wall. He struck a match and there was a tiny bat hanging bat-like by the feet. He took it down carefully, and wrapped it in his pocket-handkerchief.

They hurried home, even quicker than they had gone, and just got in as they were lighting up. Andrew marched into the dining-room, feeling very important, followed by his party, some of whom had not yet seen their prize.

"You need not be afraid," said Andrew to the family assembled round him. "Bats are always dormant in winter."

He had scarcely spoken and uncovered the bat, when to the amazement of all it flew up into the cornice of the room and disappeared. It was in vain aladder was brought and a search made. From that day

All to this nothing has been seen of the bat.



HE STRUCK A
MATCH

CHINESE PICTURES No. 2.

IN the last number we gave a Chinese picture from a book sent by a Chinese reader of the *Child's Pictorial*. Here is a second picture from the same book. It is headed, "Using the same plan to put on one's who had used to treat others." The meaning of this is not very clear. It reads like the Duchess's way, in *Alice in Wonderland*, of saying "Do unto others as you would have others to do unto you," But if it means this our young readers may be puzzled to make out what the picture has to do with it. We see one thing: that well-to-do Chinamen are helping the poor to tea, and perhaps cake. This is a thing to be praised, and a picture of it may encourage English children to remember the poor.



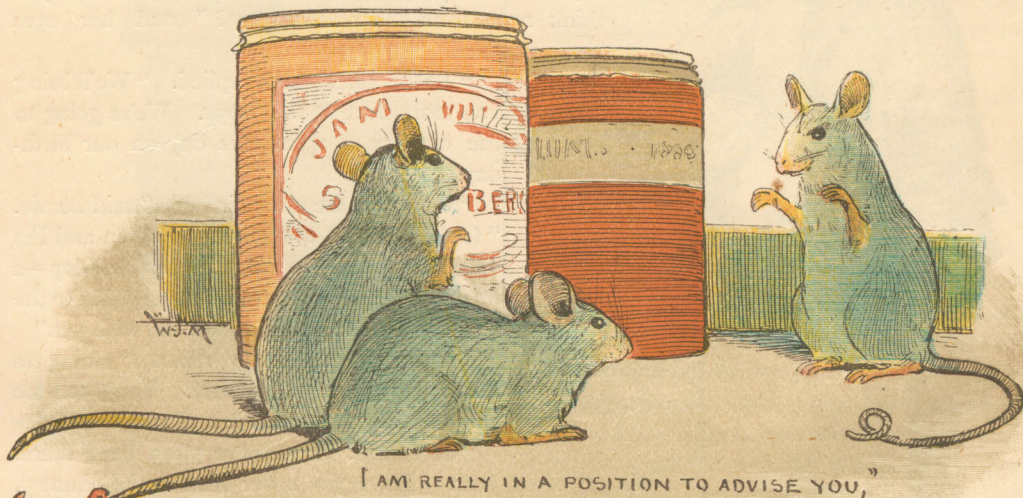


A HOUSE TO LET.

By MRS. MOLESWORTH

CHAPTER V.

THE BIRTHDAY WISH.



"I AM REALLY IN A POSITION TO ADVISE YOU,"

WE have a great deal to be thankful for," the old mouse had been remarking to his better-half the morning of the very day on which

the appalling question of "getting a cat" had been discussed, "the absence of some one who shall be nameless makes up for much. On the whole I don't see that we should be likely to mend matters by changing our quarters."

"Certainly not, in *my* humble opinion," put in Flip, with a jerk of his distinguished tail. "I am really in a position to advise you, my dear father, from my intimacy with our benefactress, Poppy. So long as we conduct ourselves as well-bred mice always prefer to do, we have no reason for uneasiness."

Father Bright-eyes looked at his eldest son admiringly.

"How he expresses himself," he thought. "He is really a mouse any parents might be proud of. Take him altogether—the twist in his tail is of course a great natural advantage—but take him altogether we have not done so badly by him, my dear," he observed to Mrs. Bright-eyes, when sure that Flip was out of hearing. For he was far too sensible, of course, to praise him to his face. "I am not at all surprised that Poppy, as he calls her, should have taken him under her special protection."

The spring was coming on by now. Already some baskets of primroses had found their way down the street where Jack and Bessie and Poppy lived, and one day when, as usual, the opposite neighbours were having a little talk while waiting for the perambulator, Jack stuffed a tiny bunch of violets into the small caretaker's hands.

"My!" she exclaimed, poking her round nose into the middle of the posy, "but they do smell sweet. Thank you kindly, Master Jack. Has they come from the country, should you think now, from the real country?" and her eyes sparkled.

"To be sure," Jack replied. "We'll bring you more next week, Poppy. We're going to the country to spend the day on our birthday."

"We've got the same birthday," said Bessie. "Isn't it funny? though Jack's seven and I'm only six. We have a treat every birthday—a treat and a wish—the treat's to be going to the country, but we haven't fixed the wish yet."

But Poppy could only repeat, "Going to the country, the real country. You'll tell me all about it, master and missy, won't you?"

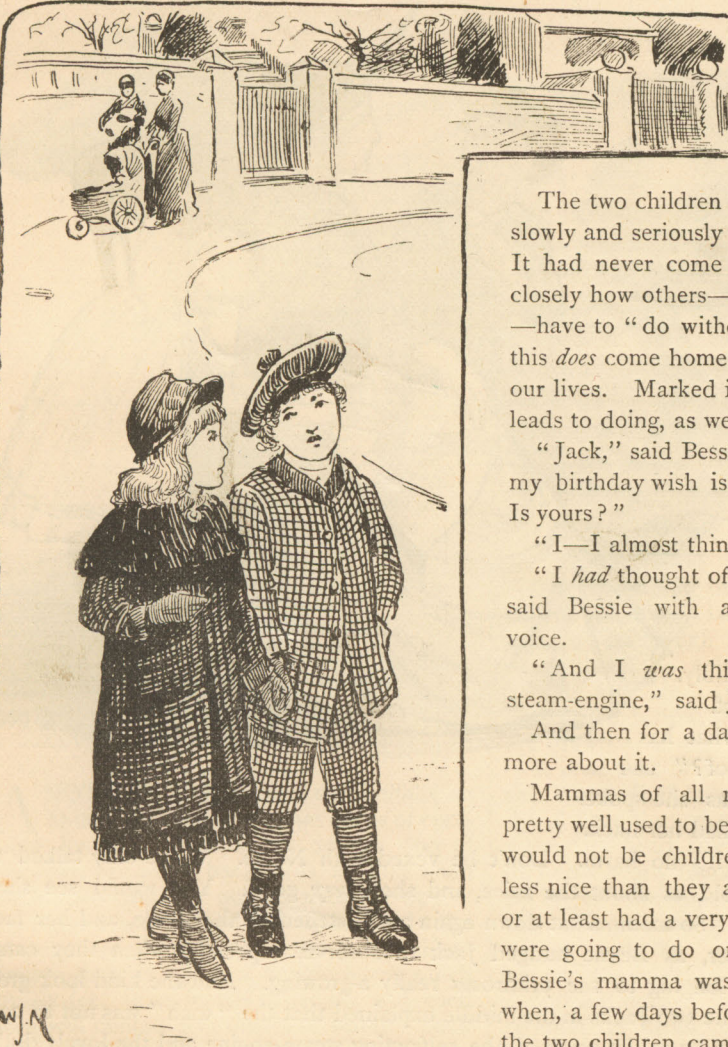
"Of course. But we've often been there. We go every year. Have you never been in the country, Poppy?"

Poppy shook her head.

"Never as I can remember," she said. "Mother's going to take me some day, though, only it won't be till she's saved a good bit. Do them flowers," and she pointed



SIGNS OF
SPRING



to the violets, "do they grow always? and the primroses?—I'd dearly love to see 'em all a-growing."

"They only grow in the spring," said Bessie. "At least—at least the primroses. I'm not quite sure about the violets," and she looked

at Jack. But Jack was too wise to commit himself. "Poor Poppy, I wish you could come to the country in the spring."

The two children walked away rather more slowly and seriously than usual this morning. It had never come home to them quite so closely how others—children of their own age—have to "do without." And the day that this *does* come home to us is a marked one in our lives. Marked in a very blessed way if it leads to doing, as well as feeling.

"Jack," said Bessie after a while, "I think my birthday wish is beginning to get fixed. Is yours?"

"I—I almost think so too," said Jack.

"I *had* thought of a doll's dinner-service," said Bessie with a slight quiver in her voice.

"And I *was* thinking of a winding-up steam-engine," said Jack, rather gruffly.

And then for a day or two they said no more about it.

Mammas of all ranks I think, must be pretty well used to being surprised. Children would not be children, and certainly much less nice than they are if one always knew or at least had a very good idea of what they were going to do or say. But Jack's and Bessie's mamma was rather *extra* surprised when, a few days before the double birthday, the two children came to tell her they had fixed what their wish was to be, and that it was "to take Poppy with us to the country."

"To take whom?" asked mamma, hastily running over in her mind all the individuals, dog, cat, toy-horse, or doll, that "Poppy" could possibly be.



"She's the little caretaker at number nine, and she's never seen the country, not to say to remember it. And her mother goes out charing, and her real name's Sleena Mary," Bessie ran off glibly.

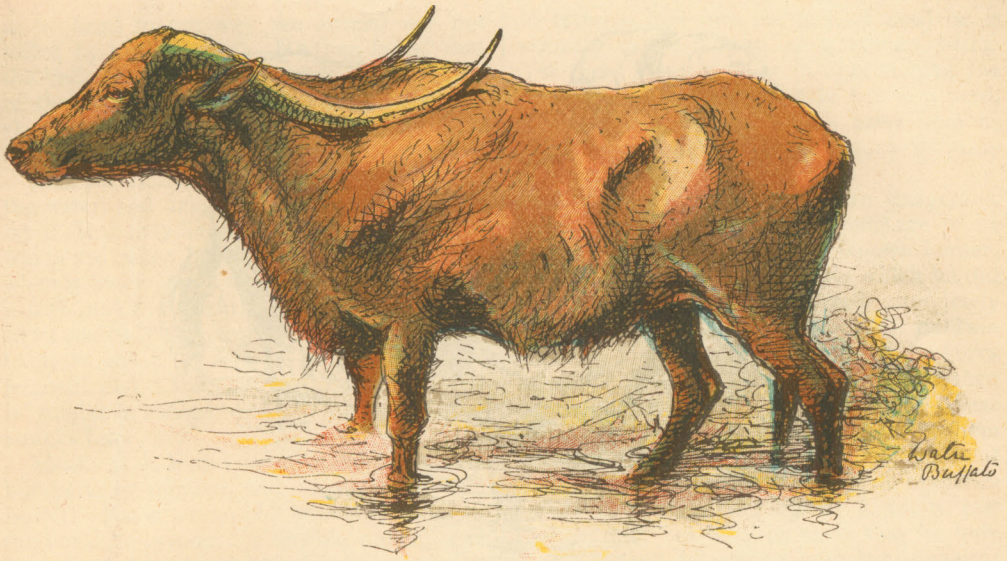
Mamma looked aghast.

"My dear Bessie, what has Nurse been thinking of?" she exclaimed, getting up as she spoke. But Jack and Bessie pulled her back.

"Oh, mamma dear, it's no harm. Don't be vexed with Nurse. We've only talked to her a little, and she told us about the mice, and she's *very* good. You would see she's good," they intreated. So mamma sat down again and listened to the whole, and her face grew kinder and kinder, as Bessie nudged Jack to observe, especially when they came to the part of Poppy's longing to see primroses really a-growing. And the kind look grew more than kind when the two Jacks-in-the-middle explained that the "wish" was not to cost them nothing, but was to be at the price of the self-acting steam-engine and the lovely doll's dinner-service. Only being a prudent mamma as well as a kind one, all she would *promise* was to see and think about it.

(To be continued.)





THE ZOO.

By THE REV. J. G. WOOD.

Illustrated by HARRISON WEIR.

OXEN—THE BUFFALO.

ANOTHER Indian ox is the Buffalo, an animal that sometimes has horns of enormous length. These horns do not spread sideways, but point backwards, so that when the buffalo stretches out its neck the tips of the horns reach beyond the withers. In the Museum of Natural History, South Kensington there is a pair of buffalo horns which are six feet, three inches in length, and each horn will contain five quarts of water. Such horns as these are mostly made into bows. They are first sawn asunder through their whole length, then softened by boiling and steaming, flattened, properly curved and shaped, and fixed into a wooden handle. They are afterwards painted and varnished, and when rightly handled, can send an arrow to a very great distance.

The arnee, as this buffalo is sometimes called, is a very large animal, being often quite six feet high at the shoulder. It is nearly black in colour, and is an awkward looking creature. It is however very strong, and although slow, useful when heavy weights are drawn.

It is so fond of water that it is often called the Water Buffalo, and in the hot weather, it will float throughout the whole day in the water, its head stretched forwards, so that its horns nearly touch its back, and only the tip of its nose appears above the water. In this odd position it will sleep for hours together, and the muddier the water, the happier the buffalo seems to be.

Indeed during the summer, the buffalo requires to drink its fill of water at least every hour, and unless its body be wet, or at least, covered with mud, the thick black hide begins to crack, and the animals are wretched until they are again wet.

When they are in this state, they must not be taken near water. They can smell it at a wonderful distance, and when they have once smelt it, nothing can stop them from



forcing their way into it. Mr. H. C. Barkley tells an amusing story of this animal.

About eleven o'clock on a summer morning, he saw a stately old Turk and his wife going slowly up a hill in an "araba", a sort of cart drawn by a pair of buffaloes. The day was very hot and the animals were tired, so that it was as much as they could do to drag the cart up the hill. Just as they reached the top, they caught sight of a small lake, and off they set at a fast trot.

The old Turk jumped out in front and banged them on their snouts with his stick, while his wife jumped out behind and screamed at them. Nothing could stop them, and on they went, first through a muddy marsh, and then into the lake, dragging the araba, full of the Turk's property, after them. Having reached the deep water, they first drank enough, as Mr. Barkley says, "to float a gun-boat," and then quietly went to sleep, with nothing but

their wet, black noses above the surface. Five hours afterwards, Mr. Barkley came back by the same road. There were the buffaloes still asleep in the water, the araba, with its owner's bedding, &c. in it, floating behind them, and the Turk and his wife sitting on the bank, waiting until they should think fit to come out.

Near the Arnee you will see the buffalo of South Africa. It is not a pleasant animal to look at, and its habits are even worse than its looks.

The horns, although of no great length, are very strong, and at their roots are so wide that they join each other on the forehead. One of my friends who met a buffalo in the bush, fired at its forehead at a distance of a few yards. The animal dropped as if it were dead, but in a moment sprang up again, and charged as fiercely as if nothing had happened to it. After several more shots had been fired, it was killed, and then my friend looked

at its head to see why the animal was not killed by his first shot. He then found that the bullet had struck the buffalo in the middle of the forehead, but was flattened on the skull, so that the animal was only stunned for the moment.

Like the Indian buffalo, it is very fond of the water, and delights in covering itself with mud. It mostly lives in the thick, low forests which are called by the name of "bush," and when it has found a shady pool, it will lie in it with only the nostrils out of the water so as to enable it to breathe. No one would be likely to see it in such a position, and the moment that a traveller approaches the spot it suddenly rushes out of the water and attacks him.

Mostly it is found in large herds, several hundreds in number, and then need not be feared. But when an old bull lives alone in the bush, he is indeed a terrible animal, and Mr. H. M. Stanley, thinks that he is more to be dreaded than either the lion or the crocodile. His mode of attack is to make a sudden rush, to knock down this enemy, to crush his ribs by kneeling upon him, and then

to trample him into the ground until he is scarcely to be known as a human being. Yet there is no danger in approaching the herds, and a hunter will ride up to a herd, pick out one animal, drive it away from its fellows and kill it without any of its companions attempting to rescue it.

Sometimes even the cows are dangerous, but as a rule only the solitary bulls are to be feared. Mr. Baldwin, the well-known hunter, was once attacked by a buffalo which he did not see. The animal charged completely through a bush behind which Mr. Baldwin tried to hide himself, carrying on its horns about half a cartload of branches. It then charged him again, but fortunately these animals cannot see very well in front of them on account of their peculiar horns, and as it was besides blinded by the mass of branches which it was carrying on its head, it just missed him, but was so close that he only saved himself by putting both hands against its side as it rushed past, and pushing it away from him.

One of these animals was so cunning that it very nearly killed a Kafir hunter who had



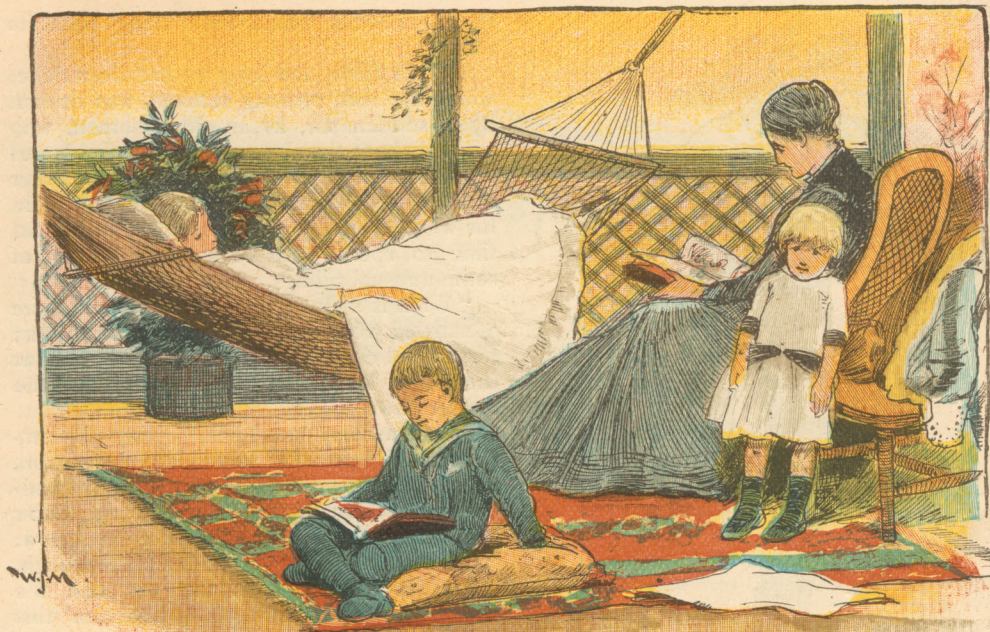


wounded it. On being wounded, it dashed away through the bush, followed by the hunter. Suddenly the man found himself attacked from behind, and tossed into the air. Fortunately he fell among the branches of a tree, clung to them and so saved his life.

The cunning animal had only run for a few paces. It had then backed into the bush, allowed the hunter to pass it, and had attacked him in a manner which he could not have expected. After the buffalo had left the spot, not being able to find his enemy, the man contrived to reach the ground and make his way to the camp happy to have escaped with only several broken ribs. Had he not fallen into the tree, the buffalo would have sprang upon him as soon as he reached the ground, and before he could recover from the fall would have trampled him to death. Killing a buffalo is not an easy task.

On one occasion Mr. Baldwin was on horseback chasing a buffalo, and shot it through the body whilst galloping at full speed. All its legs flew from under it, and it rolled for some yards along the ground. The instant that he fired Mr. Baldwin jumped behind a low bush, but in a moment the buffalo charged through the bush, almost treading on him and made its escape.

When on foot he always hid himself as soon as he fired at a buffalo, and more than once saved his life by so doing. Once he shot a cow buffalo, and sprang into the branches of a tree. The buffalo charged at him, but struck the tree with such force that she shook Mr. Baldwin out of the branch to which he was clinging, at the same time falling dead at the foot of the tree. She had been shot through the heart, and yet was able to make a charge which might have cost the hunter his life.



ELECTA.

A TRUE STORY.

BY MARY DAVISON.

CHAPTER I.

IT happened a long time ago, and in a far away place, but it did happen really and truly; and as I sit down now to tell the story of it on paper the day comes vividly back to me, when it was not a story, but an actual scene that we were living through, with our hearts beating fast with hope and dread.

It was in America, in the wild prairie country of one of the western states, where circumstances had fixed our home for a time, and where we were living in a pretty wooden house built specially for ourselves on the top of the highest mound in all the great rolling, meadowy plain, that stretched away as far as the eye could see.

That height gave us a fine view over all the country.

Just below us lay the town, where one broad, straight street had been marked out, but where all the buildings for so far were two or three stores, and a dozen or so of separate wooden houses, together with a church, a chapel, and a couple of meeting-houses, all a good deal too big for their present congregations; but as the place was young, and meant to grow, of course it had to prepare for the future.

Beyond the street, scattered all over the prairie, were various homesteads—wooden houses with groups of young plantation round them, and big fields of wheat and Indian corn, and beyond that again other villages just like our own; and there was nothing else that I can remember to be seen, except the long, winding line of the river marked by the green of the thick bushes that grew along its banks, and the long straight line of the railway,



JOE

that was marked by tall telegraph posts, and that stretched away towards the far, far west.

It had been a very hot summer, and about the middle of it there came a Sunday, such a burning day that we could scarcely venture outside the big sitting-room, with its high, open-raftered roof, and its green jalousie-shaded windows, which was at any rate the coolest place in the house.

By evening however when the sun was well down in the west we all went out to sit under the shade of the southern verandah and enjoy a breath of fresher air, and were lounging there in idle enjoyment; we elders sitting with our books in big cane rocking-chairs, while the children found places for themselves anywhere, on the steps of the verandah, on the short burnt grass outside it, or in one of

the hammocks which, were slung from its roof.

I don't know how long we had been there, when the soft evening stillness was broken by a sudden stir, as an old Irishman, who worked about the place at all sorts of odds and ends of employment, came round the corner of the house with a haste and excitement in his whole air that told us, even before he had time to speak, that he was the bringer of some unusual tidings.

"What is it, Joe?" said my mother in quite a startled voice, as he stopped breathless; for he had come up the long slope plainly at the top of his speed. "Is there anything the matter down below?"

"Ay, ma'am," said Joe, feeling the importance of being able to produce a sensation, and pausing a moment to pass his red handkerchief across his hot forehead, and allow the suspense of his audience to grow, "there's something the matter sure enough. There's a child lost, so there is, and the whole town and country's out sarchin' this hour by."

"A child lost!" exclaimed my mother, chorused by all of us as we drew round Joe, eager for his news, "What child?" but Joe's ways both of thought and speech were slow, and it needed a good deal of questioning before we heard even the little there was to hear of the lost child.

She had a fine, high-sounding name, poor little thing, for she was called Electa—Electa Smith—and we all knew her quite well by sight, a yellow-haired, round-eyed little girl of scarcely four years old, whose parents, poor people, and rather new comers in the place, lived in one of the wooden houses in the sketched-out street that I have spoken of already.

Some time in the earlier part of that afternoon it seemed that little Electa, overpowered by the heat, had fallen asleep; and her mother leaving her lying comfortably on a sort of settle in the kitchen, with one of the elder children sitting in the room with her, preparing a Sunday-school lesson, had gone out to spend a little of the after-dinner leisure hour in

visiting a sick neighbour. She was but a little while absent, or at least so she thought, though perhaps time may have passed more quickly than she fancied, since it was not measured by any clock:—but when she found the settle empty, and both children gone from the kitchen on her return, she had no uneasiness, only concluding that as the cool of the evening had now begun they were playing about outside as usual, and well enough contented to be able to set about preparing the supper in undisturbed quietness.

Half an hour afterwards however the elder girl whom she had left with Electa came in from the afternoon Sunday-school, and Mrs. Smith was a little startled to find that she knew nothing of her sister, except that she had wakened up soon after her mother went out, and that when she herself, a little later, started for school, the child was playing about the door-step with two or three of the neighbours' children. "And she's likely with them still, mother," the girl added, "for Electa's one that likes company, and that never goes far by herself."

"Ay," said Mrs. Smith, who was standing out on the street, and looking along it anxiously, "she's that timid and easy feared she's likely in some of the neighbours' houses, and you had better go and see after her at once, Mary Jane."

But the neighbours had not seen Electa, nor was she to be found anywhere about the village street.

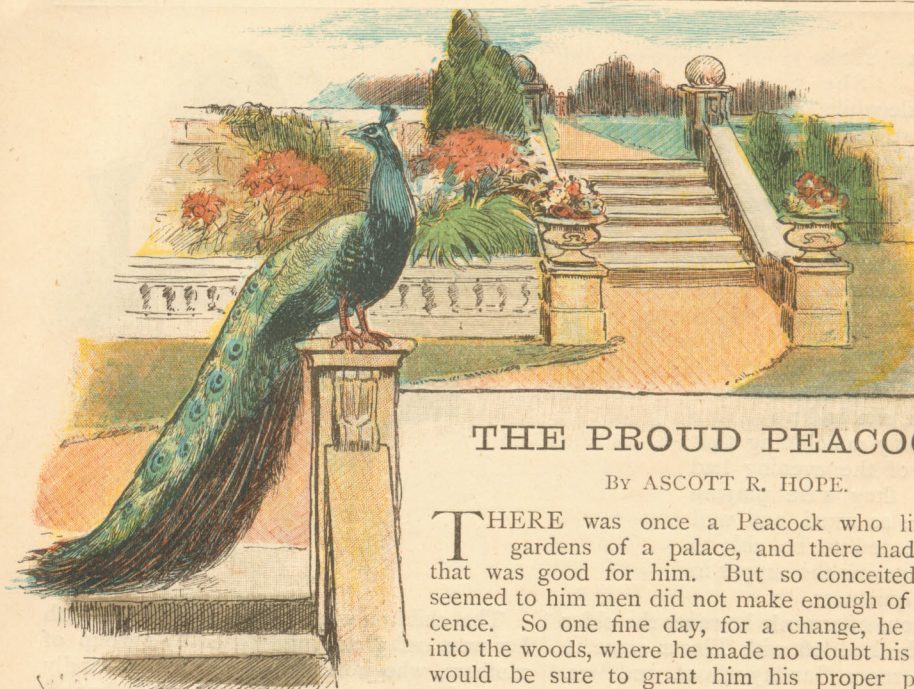


The children who had been last seen with her were called and questioned by a group of mothers, who were now collected in kindly sympathy round Mrs. Smith's door, but all they could tell was, that they had only played with Electa for a few minutes, and that having then been called in to supper in their own homes they had left her alone.

No further trace of her was to be found; but as her mother's was the last house at the western end of the village, it seemed more likely that if the child had wandered off by herself she had gone in that direction, for had she taken the other, she could scarcely fail to have been seen by some of the people who were idling about their doors; and accordingly the friends and neighbours, who had quickly volunteered to begin a search, had mostly started in pursuance of that idea.

And that was the point to which things had come when old Joe had started up the slope to bring us the news.

(To be continued.)



THE PROUD PEACOCK.

By ASCOTT R. HOPE.

THERE was once a Peacock who lived in the gardens of a palace, and there had everything that was good for him. But so conceited was he, it seemed to him men did not make enough of his magnificence. So one fine day, for a change, he stalked out into the woods, where he made no doubt his fellow birds would be sure to grant him his proper place among them.

"I am come to be your King!" he announced to them in his loudest and harshest voice.

"Only think of that!" piped and twittered all the other birds, overawed by his majestic airs, and they gathered around to gaze in admiring wonder at his crown and his splendid tail.

"Yes," said the Peacock, swelling himself out right royally, "you do well to look. I am certainly the finest bird that ever was, and none of you can hold a candle to me, so you may indeed be astonished at my condescension. But that is my character, you know: I am as gracious as I am beautiful; majesty and modesty go well together."

The simple natives of the wood were silent, not knowing what to say, for indeed they had never seen such a sight before. Only a nightingale ventured to gurgle out a few notes of amazement.

Then with a great fuss and flutter, King Peacock perched himself on a high tree, from which he proceeded to issue his commands.

"Stop this absurd noise!" was his first order, with a haughty glance at the poor nightingale. "None of you have the least notion of singing, you know."

The birds all stood open-mouthed and drooped their heads for shame, because they thought that a creature with such fine feathers must know what he was talking about.

"Perhaps we may have the pleasure of hearing your majesty's voice," modestly chirped out a Sparrow; and when the Peacock nodded his head in assent to this petition, they settled themselves to listen to some rare treat in the way of melody.

Then, fixing himself firm on his branch, he raised a squall that made the wood resound far and wide. The silent songsters, tried to stop their ears; the little ones trembled in their nests; the beasts for half a mile around ran out of their holes or lay there quaking to think



that the end of the world must have come.

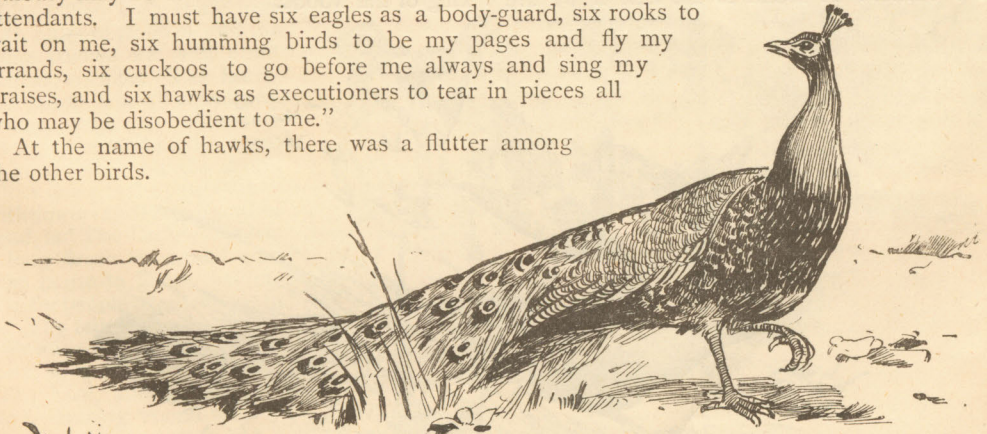
"Now you know what sort of bird I am," said the Peacock, very well satisfied with himself and with the impression he had produced on his new subjects. "Listen then, to my royal will and pleasure. What are you about at present?"

"May it please your majesty, we have been busy building our nests," answered a Thrush for the rest. "So I see, and I can't say I think much of them. You make them so absurdly small! You will leave off all this trifling at once, and set about building a proper nest for me, the largest and handsomest nest in the country."

The birds looked at one another as if not knowing what reply to make.

"The next thing is to appoint my court," went on the Peacock, "and I request that no jealousy may be shown of those birds whom I choose out as suitable attendants. I must have six eagles as a body-guard, six rooks to wait on me, six humming birds to be my pages and fly my errands, six cuckoos to go before me always and sing my praises, and six hawks as executioners to tear in pieces all who may be disobedient to me."

At the name of hawks, there was a flutter among the other birds.



"I AM COME TO BE YOUR KING!"

"The rest of you will make it your duty to provide me with food—corn, worms, snails, anything you can find. I have an excellent appetite, and am not at all particular."

"But what is to become of our little ones?" exclaimed a saucy Starling.

"Your king must be thought of first," answered the Peacock severely. "I myself am not in the habit of paying much attention to my own family. You had best send all those foolish fledglings away, in case they disturb me by their chattering."

"Oh, this is too much!" murmured a Pigeon; but his majesty took no notice of him.

"As I am tired with so much talking, I now desire my dinner to be fetched me without delay; after which you will again assemble for the purpose of hearing me lay down the law."

"His dinner!" piped an angry Mocking Bird; and a bold Magpie stood forth to address the meeting.

"I should like to know," he said, "what is the good of a king who calls screeching singing, who can't fly without getting his tail caught in the trees, who doesn't know how to build a nest, nor how to feed himself, but needs other birds to forage for him and fight his battles? It seems to me that if we are

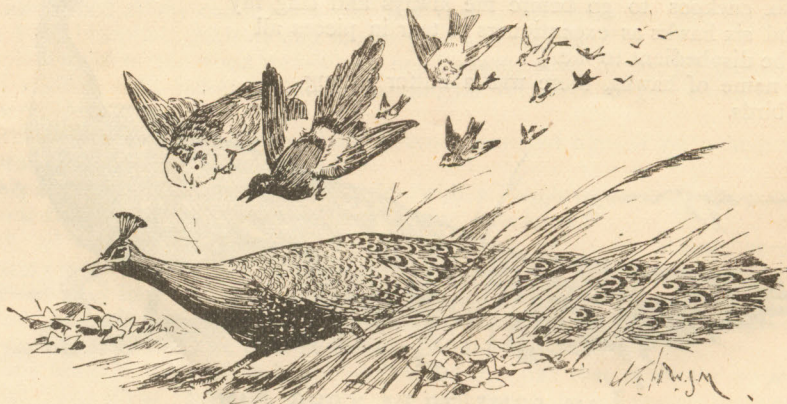
to have a king at all, we should choose one that would be more credit to us and less trouble. A grand tail isn't everything, is it?"

The Peacock tried to frown this impertinent rebel into silence; but the other birds twittered applause, and laying their heads together soon came to a resolution, which an owl was chosen to communicate to the arrogant stranger.

"Hoot!" began the owl, "We don't know much about you, but it seems that the less we have to do with you the better. All your good qualities appear to lie on the outside; and we can have no respect for any king who confesses himself to be neither amiable nor accomplished. So you will be so good as to take yourself off, or we will all fall upon you and peck you to death and set you up for a scarecrow."

"This to my face!" screamed the peacock, but nobody minded his indignation.

So, with a parting shriek, he turned his gorgeous back upon them, and waddled away, followed by a chorus of ridicule and contempt from all the birds, now that they had got over their first awe of this proud intruder. He went back to his palace as fast as he could, and never more sought to set himself up as king of the woods.



MAY-DAY A LONG TIME AGO.

THREE little children were playing in their nursery with a big rocking-horse, their last new toy that had come home the night before. Their names were Ruth, Richie, and Robbie. Uncle Will used to laugh and call them the three R's.

Presently they heard the beating of a drum and the shrill notes of a fife in the street.

"There's Punch and Judy! there's Punch and Judy!" cried they, scampering to the window.

"What a funny Punch!" said Robbie; "why, there's no room for Judy."

Their nurse came to the window and looked out.

"That's not a Punch," said she; "that's the chimney-sweeps with 'Jack in the Green'; you and Richie saw them last year, Ruth, but Robbie has never seen them."

"Yes, I 'member," said Richie; "and I 'member you 'splained about them. Tell us again, and then Robbie will know."

The nurse sat down and took Robbie on her lap, so that he could look easily on the sight below.

"Well, that big green thing is made of hoops and sticks, and then covered all over with boughs of trees. A man gets inside of it and walks about, and he is called 'Jack in the Green.' There are places cut out for his face and arms, as you can see. The man in the white calico coat, stuck over with bows of ribbons, and the white cocked hat with a red feather, is called 'The Lord.' He carries a small shovel and broom, such as chimney-sweeps use, and rattles them to keep time with the drum. The woman in the gauze dress, with flowers and feathers on her head, is 'The Lady'; she has a long brass ladle, and goes from house to house, holding it up for people to put money in it. The fellow dressed like a clown, who is playing all sorts of pranks, is called 'The Fool,' and the small boys, dancing round with shovels and brooms, are those who go up the chimneys to sweep them."

"The lady is nodding to me, and holding up her ladle," said Ruth.—"She wants you to put some money in it," said nurse.—"Mamma will give her money; look, there is Janet gone out to give her some."

The chimney-sweeps had another dance round, and then trooped away to the next street.

"Good-bye, Mr. Chimney-sweeps," cried the little folks, and ran back to play with their rocking-horse.

This all happened a long time ago. Ruth, Richie, and Robbie are now grown-up people, and have little children of their own, to whom they sometimes tell what the First of May was like when they were little, and how it used to be called "Chimney-sweeps' Day." But now no one sees "Jack in the Green," he has quite gone out of fashion.





A. M. Mitchell

WHAT IS IT?

BY MRS. ISLA SITWELL.

DOROTHY, BIRDIE AND PHYLLIS were staying at Grandpapa's in the country.

On three sides of the kitchen garden the walls were very high with fruit trees trained over them. On the fourth side there was a low wall, then a deep border full of flowers, and then a wide gravel walk, where the little girls liked to roll their hoops up and down.

One day as they were doing this, they were surprised by hearing a most extraordinary noise at the other side of the wall. The children stopped short, the hoops ran on for a little way and then fell down.

"What is it?" asked Birdie. Phyllis looked anxiously round, and clung to her big sisters.

"Let us ask gardener," said Dorothy, but gardener had gone home to his dinner.

"It might be a giant," suggested Birdie.

"P'raps a fairy," put in Phyllis.

"Not unless it was a bad fairy," said Dorothy, "a very bad fairy it must be, for it was a horrible noise. Besides you know

there are really no fairies, except in story-books. It's a great pity."

"I don't mind about there not being bad fairies," said Birdie. "There's the noise again!"

"Let's go and see what it is," said Dorothy.

Both Birdie and Phyllis exclaimed, "Oh no, no," and Dorothy was not quite brave enough to go all alone.

She looked round to consider, and then a bright idea struck her.

"I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll climb up the wall and look over."

It was not a high wall, but it took the three little people some time to reach the top, and Dorothy was the only one who could get her head right over. She looked all round; there was nothing unusual to be seen.

Then, suddenly, a donkey lifted up its head, and its tail, and its voice, and began to bray.

The children scrambled down again, quicker than they had gone up.

"That's all! Only a donkey," said Dorothy with a sigh of relief.

But Phyllis, who had not seen, thought that it might have been a bad fairy after all.



A HOUSE TO LET.

By MRS. MOLESWORTH.

CHAPTER VI.

FAIRYLAND.



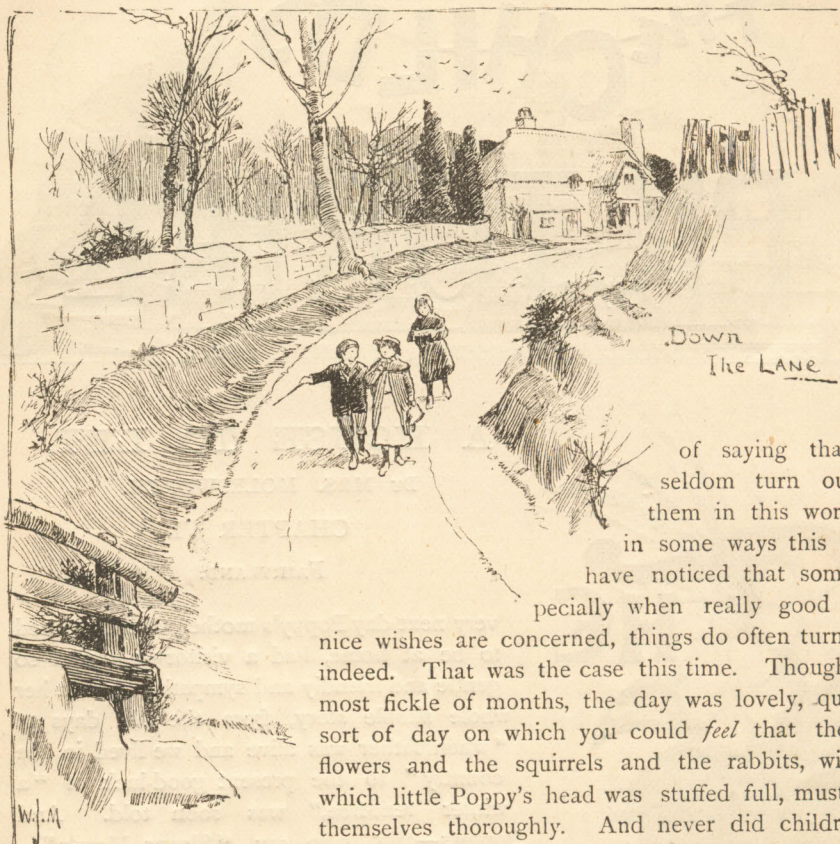
very next day Poppy's mother, who happened to be at home, had a visitor—a visitor so gentle and friendly and sympathizing that her whole simple story, from the old days of “when father was alive and we lived in the country” to the present good-luck of “a winter rent-free,” was soon told. And Poppy's—that is to say “Sleena Mary's”—small womanly ways and funny fancies, brought smiles to the visitor's face.

“Never was such a child for amusin' of herself,” said the mother. “She'll be goin' to school again, but I had to keep her at home a bit this winter, for her eyes was weakly and the doctor wouldn't let her read. But she's better now—the good air of this fine house's set her up.”

“It seems a nice house,” said the children's mother, “and you keep it so tidy.”

“It's nice and clean all over. The old people as lived here was very pertickler, and Poppy's always a keeping down the dust,” said the caretaker with pride. And she was very proud to show the lady through the rooms.

“It is a very nice house,” she repeated as she went. And to herself she added—“I



think it would be the very thing for *them* if they decide upon taking a house, and it would be nice to have them so near." The long-looked-for birthday fell on a Wednesday. People are fond

of saying that things very seldom turn out as we wish them in this world, and perhaps in some ways this is true. Still I

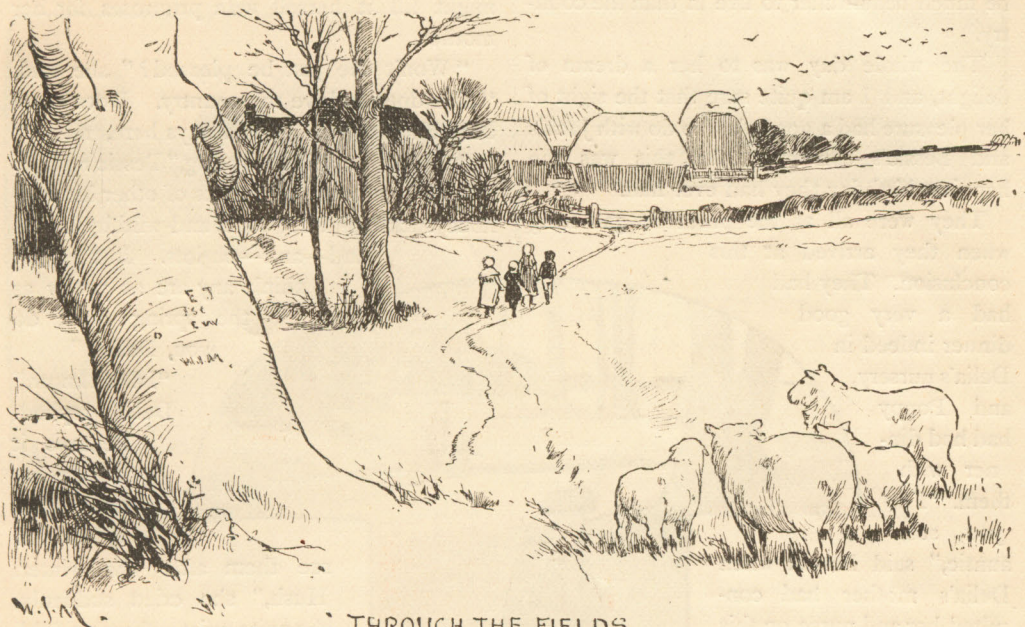
have noticed that sometimes, and especially when really good and kind and

nice wishes are concerned, things do often turn out very right indeed. That was the case this time. Though only April, the most fickle of months, the day was lovely, quite lovely; the sort of day on which you could *feel* that the birds and the flowers and the squirrels and the rabbits, with thoughts of which little Poppy's head was stuffed full, must be all enjoying themselves thoroughly. And never did children's faces look

brighter and happier than those of our three little friends, as under the safe care of Nurse No. 2, they drove off in the brougham, which papa had said they must have for the occasion, to the railway. The baby brothers kissed their hands from the nursery window, Mamma called after them that they must look out for their cousin at the station, and Poppy's mother stood curtsying and smiling at the area gate of number nine, hardly able to believe she was not dreaming.

And even the Bright-eyes family had no reason to grudge Poppy her treat for she had begged her mother to put some crumbs in the usual place for them.

An hour and a half brought the travellers to their journey's end. By this time Poppy was almost speechless with delight. The first real green fields and woods had been met by her with cries of pleasure, but when, as they went further, the country grew still prettier, and here and there on the banks the yellow primroses smiled up in welcome and the birds flitted about in the sunshine, she grew silent.



THROUGH THE FIELDS

"Don't you like it, Poppy?" asked Bessie.

"Bless you, missy, I should rather think I did. I've no more words to say—that's what it is," she answered.

She found her tongue again however when they had got out of the train and were walking through the lanes with the cousin who had come to meet them with her nurse.

"Shall we go home by the lane and the fields?" asked Delia. "Won't Poppy like it better than the road?"

For the Jacks-in-the-middles' Mamma had written all about Poppy, and Delia meant to join her cousins in making the little caretaker's first day in the country as happy as possible.

"Of course she would, and so would we," said Bessie. "It's such fun climbing stiles

after you've been a good long while in London."

"And this afternoon we are to go to the wood to get primroses for auntie," said Delia. "She wrote that she wanted a lot for a dinner-party. Mamma will lend us her nice flat flower-baskets—we line them with damp moss and it keeps the flowers so much fresher than when they're all on the top of each other in deep baskets. If only it was warmer we might have had tea in the wood."

"Tea in the wood," repeated Poppy, in amazement.

Then they had to explain to her all about gipsy teas, and picnics and nutting and black-berrying expeditions, till the poor little girl became quite convinced that, as she told her mother that evening, Heaven itself couldn't

be much beautifuller to live in than the country.

The whole day was to her a dream of delight, and I am quite sure that the sight of her pleasure had a good deal to do with Jack's and Bessie's conviction that this was the happiest birthday they had ever had.

They were all at the primrose gathering when they arrived at this conclusion. They had

had a very good dinner indeed in Delia's nursery, and Poppy had had dinner with them. "For

you see, auntie," said Bessie, when Delia's mother had consulted her and nurse on this knotty point, "it wouldn't seem so like treating her as a friend if we sent her down to have her dinner in the kitchen, would it? And very likely she'd be too shy to eat. She's not a bit shy with us, is she, Carter?"

"No, Miss Bessie, she seems to me just right, for she's not forward neither. She's really a very well-behaved little girl, ma'am," she added, to Delia's mother.

"So I think," she replied.

They lent Poppy a basket, so that she

might fill it herself with primroses for her mother.

"Won't she just be pleased?" she said. "She does so love the country. Does these beautiful flowers grow always here, miss?"

"Oh no, only in the spring," Bessie replied. "But in summer there's lots of other kinds—honeysuckle and dog-roses and wild hyacinths

and—and—oh lots. But I don't

think any are as pretty as the spring ones, do you, Delia?"

"I don't know," Delia replied.

"Perhaps it seems so because we're so pleased to

see them after the winter. Hush," she cried suddenly, "be quite quiet—there's a field-mouse—don't you see? there under the leaves. Oh, it's gone! I do so like them; they have such bright eyes."

Poppy gazed before her in astonishment.

"A field-mouse," she said. "Is there mice as lives in the country, just like there's people as lives there?"

All the other children laughed.

"Yes, of course," they said.

"I wish I'd seen him," she said. "That'll be something to tell Flip about, next time he comes for his dinner," she added to herself. "Poor Flip! I wish I could have brought him to see the country too."



(To be continued.)



ELECTA.

A TRUE STORY.

By MARY DAVISON

CHAPTER II.

IT was certainly the most stirring event we could any of us remember, and it would have been strange indeed if we had not been moved with the keenest interest and sympathy; for we knew almost all the village people more or less, and when any of them were in trouble or difficulty they were sure to come to our

mother, knowing that she was ready to meet them with all kinds of practical helpfulness.

There was of course a great deal of wondering among us all over poor little Electa's fate, and a great many suggestions of all sorts of places, likely and unlikely, to which she might have strayed. Even Kitty, the four-year-old baby of the family, who had listened with wide-open, wondering eyes, pulled mother's dress eagerly to secure a hearing, and said, shaking her little head with the most confident emphasis, "Kitty will find 'Lecta, mother; Kitty kite sure 'Lecta is hid ahind the turtains," that being her own favourite place of concealment on all emergencies; but mother was thinking so much of that other poor mother down below us, that even our little Kitty could hardly make her smile.

As soon as we had heard Joe's story my two eldest brothers, who were big boys of fifteen and sixteen, at once announced their intention of going down to join the search.

I think we should all have liked to go too indeed, but as that could not be, we sent one of the younger boys with the others as far as the village, that he might bring us back whatever information he could gather as to whether any clue had yet been found; or let us know at any rate what was being done, and if any capable person had undertaken to organize the search; for the night would be a moonless one, and now that the evening would so soon be closing in the matter was getting very serious.

You may think how excited we all were, the more so since we could only guess at what was passing in the village, and how anxiously we watched and waited; but it was

not till the search was over and our messengers had all come back, that we knew any of those particulars which I am now able to give from their report.

Just about the time that the alarm had fairly risen the different little congregations were about to meet for evening service, and it must have been a curious and solemn scene when each minister, standing at the door of his place of worship, announced to his assembled people that, as many helpers were needed to carry out a complete search before the light failed, there would be no service held till all that could be attempted had been done.

Up on our roof, with field glasses which were eagerly passed from hand to hand, we watched and wondered what it meant, when we saw the people scattered from round the different churches; but it soon grew too dark for us to see more, till suddenly lights began to appear, and then it seemed to us as if the whole of the people of the village and neighbourhood were out, and every one carrying a lantern or a blazing torch.



The Search
in the
corn fields

I have said that all round the little town were great fields of corn, each one as large as a good-sized farm with us, and you know the Indian corn grows to a great height, and is sown in rows, between which one can make one's way, as if it were a sort of path between high hedges.

Well, the only thing that could be thought of as to little Electa's fate was, that she might have got into one of these fields, and beginning to wander about in it had strayed farther from home than she knew, and perhaps lost her way, even before she had been overtaken by the darkness; so now the nearer fields were to be searched; and up and down between the long rows of corn went men and boys, holding their torches high as they went along, and shouting now and then, that the missing child might hear, even if she could not see, her rescuers.

Sometimes as we watched we saw a number of torches grouped together as if

round some object, and then one of us would be sure to exclaim joyfully, "Oh, they have found Electa!"—but it was only that the torch-bearers had met to consult together as



The Search
by The River

to their next movements, and when they separated again we knew that the search was not ended yet.

So the evening passed and the night came, and still they looked on, though the lights went farther and farther from the village, and the voices died away in the distance out of our hearing.

Then at last the seekers paused; for they knew how useless it must be to go on, since they were already beyond any point to which the child could possibly have reached; and so for a little while they waited, thinking what could be tried next.

Well, there was only one place more to be thought of—a place that had long ago come across the mind of Electa's mother, with a thrill of dread so terrible, that she had driven away the thought of it again as intolerable, and that was—the river.

Winding quietly along, with its belt of greenwood on either side, there was no place where the village children loved to play so well as on its banks. And a well-worn path, down which Electa's little feet had often stepped, led down to it.

The way would have been very easy, the idea in a child's mind very natural; and when that pause came, and the search through the fields was finished, the whole party, almost with one accord, thought of it on the instant, and our hearts sank with a sudden awed fear, as from our lofty outlook we saw the crowd of torches, hurrying along that well-known river path.

Once they entered the wood, we lost sight of them; but now and then a gleaming light appearing through an opening, or showing above the bushes when they were low, told us that the men were slowly following the

course of the stream towards the dam, above the little flour mill lower down.

Very close and anxious, my brothers told us, was the search as they neared the dam ; and the boys felt their own hearts beat fast as they sometimes saw a torch held down over the water, while its bearer peered among the over-hanging bushes, pushing them aside with careful hands to see if any dreadful secret were hidden among those drooping branches.

But, happily, the riddle of Electa's fate was not read there.

Before the dam was reached, a cry was heard, beginning in the big cornfield that was nearest to the end of the village street, and caught up from one to another till it reached the searchers in the wood, and grew then to a many-voiced shout, that the child was found.

Not a stone's throw from her home, only a little way inside the field, crouched right into one of the corn-rows as if for hiding, and sound asleep, her mother had found her.

In restless misery, that poor mother, who could neither bear to follow the lookers

where they had gone, nor to give up the search herself, had wandered back into the field, and walked wearily once more up and down the long rows, where so many others had walked already, wringing her hands in an agony that found no expression in words, and sometimes calling the child's name as she went.

A pitying neighbour followed her, and suddenly, though they had no light but what the stars gave, some slight movement, or we know not what quick instinct of her own heart, made Electa's mother start aside

with a smothered cry, and dropping on her knees to look closer she saw there among the whispering, grassy leaves of the corn the little sleeping form of the lost child.

Wakened up and carried home with such thankful rejoicing as I need not try to describe.

Electa was too young to be able to give much account of herself, and no one ever knew exactly how it had happened, that she

could have been there, so close at

hand, and yet not found long ago.

It was evident however from what she did tell, that the noise and the lights had frightened her, and that in her childish terror she had tried to escape from those who sought for her : and they could only suppose that she had kept out of sight by creeping through from row to row as the torches approached, and that when they were all gone, and the field was quiet again, she had fallen asleep in her hiding place.



- FOUND! -



THE ZOO.

BY THE REV. J. G. WOOD.

Illustrated by HARRISON WEIR.

OXEN—THE BISON, THE GOUR, ETC.

THE smallest of the buffalo tribe is the Anoa from the island of Celebes, which looks very much like a young Cape buffalo before the horns have grown long enough to take the upward curve.

These horns grow in a straight line from the forehead and when full-grown are as long as the head. When wild, it lives among the rocky places of its island, and is so fierce and strong that it is not easily caught, and even when it has been taken will not be tamed like the Indian buffalo. Some of these animals which had been caught were put into the same place with fourteen stags. Now, the stag is itself a fierce animal, but although the anoas were only in company with the stags for a few hours, they attacked and killed the whole fourteen.

Tallest of all the ox tribe is the Gour of India, a full-grown bull having been known to measure six feet ten inches in height at the shoulders. Indeed, the natives call it by a name which signifies "elephant with horns."

Its colour is dark brown, sometimes so dark as to be nearly black. The legs however are white from the knees and hocks to the hoofs, looking as if the animal had been painted white or was wearing white stockings. As the back is arched, and there is no dewlap, the gour has a very awkward look.

It lives in little herds, sometimes only nine or ten in number and sometimes nearly thirty. During the heat of the day the gours remain in the shade of the woods, but venture into the open ground about evening and before the morning sun has heated the air.

As often happens with animals which live in herds, the old males are in the habit of leaving the herd, or perhaps being driven out of it by their stronger juniors, and living alone in the woods. These animals are very fierce, and much feared by the natives, who would rather

meet a tiger than an old gour. The month of May is mostly chosen for the gour to take to the woods.

Colonel Campbell mentions that one of these old gour had strayed into the open country, and was found by some young officers who were going on a boar hunt. Although they had no weapons but their boar-spears, they attacked the gour, and after a hard fight, managed to kill it. One of the officers nearly lost his life in the battle, the gour tossing his horse in the air as easily as a bull would toss a dog.

The skin of this animal is so heavy that a single raw hide is a heavy load for a bullock. The hide upon the shoulders is nearly two inches thick when dry and is much valued for making shields.

The flesh, especially that of the hump, is remarkably good.

The skull is so thick that an ounce bullet has been known to flatten upon it though it struck the animal just above the eyes.

English hunters mostly call the gour by the name of bison, which, as we shall presently see, is quite a different animal.

Three of the wild cattle of Asia possess the strange ridge upon the shoulders. The second is the Gayal, which has many of the habits of the gour.

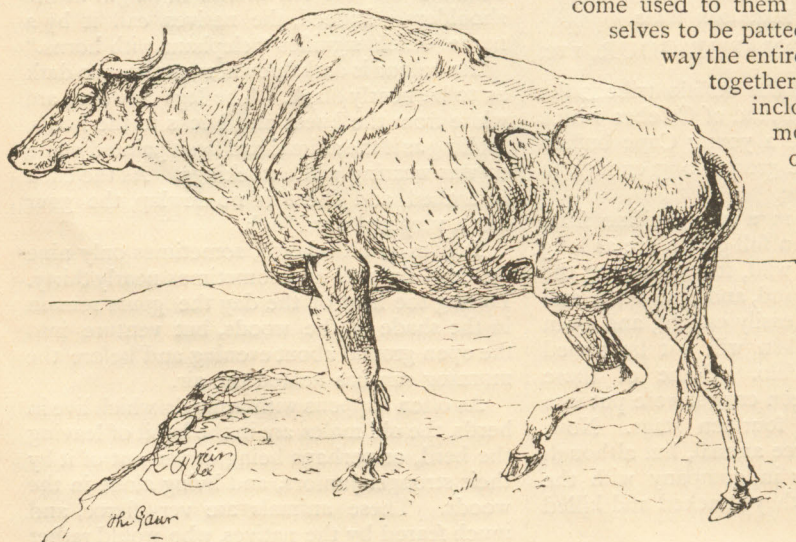
It is not so large as the gour and can be more easily tamed, the natives having large herds of them. A very clever mode of catching the wild gayal is used in the hill regions.

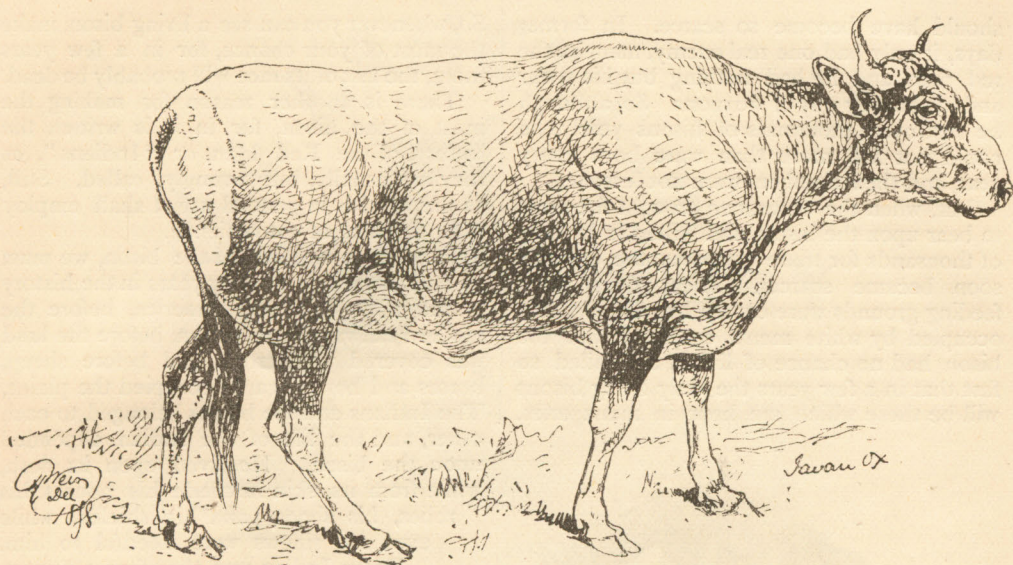
As is well known all cattle are madly fond of salt, and when they are wild, will travel to great distances to obtain it. So the hunters keep by them a number of balls made of earth soaked in brine and mixed with cotton wool, the cotton serving to bind the earth together. When they see a herd of wild gayals they drive their own animals towards them, and for a while, leave them to themselves. They are sure to mix with each other and after a few days the tame females want to go home.

Knowing the path which they will take, the hunters strew some of the salt balls on the way. The cattle begin to eat them, but can only consume them slowly, being hindered by the cotton. The hunters then mix with the herd, patting and talking to their tame animals and giving them salt. At first the wild gayals are afraid of the men, but in a few weeks become used to them and will allow themselves to be patted and fed.

In this way the entire herd, wild and tame together, is brought into the inclosure, and after a few months become so fond of it that if it is needful to change quarters they cannot be induced to leave their homes until it is burned to the ground and nothing left but ashes.

The gayal, like the buffalo, holds its head forwards with the nose nearly in a line with the back.





THE last of these huge cattle is the Banteng, sometimes called the Javan Ox. Like the gayal, although it is found wild, living in small herds, it is also tamed and in Borneo is a very useful worker. Like the gour, it has white legs, but it also has a patch of white on the hind quarters so that it may be easily known.

Now we come to the real bisons, the first of which is generally known by the name of Aurochs, *i.e.* auer-ochs, ure-ox or field-ox. It is also called the bonassus. Many years ago before the Zoological Gardens had been made, a number of wild beasts used to be kept in Exeter 'Change, a building in the Strand, where Exeter Hall now stands. It so happened that a bonassus was shown there, and at once became the fashion, like poor Jumbo of later days.

In a former age, when Cæsar invaded England, the aurochs was very common in the Black Forest, and Cæsar mentions that it was a fierce animal, attacking other beasts as well as man, and being very swift of foot. The young men used to take it in pitfalls, and preserve

the horns as proofs of their courage. The horns were mostly cleaned, polished, and edged with silver, and then used as drinking cups.

At the present time, only a few of these animals are left, and even they would have been killed long ago had not a law been passed in their favour. It is thought that even in spite of this law, the aurochs is becoming fewer, and that in a few years it will perish off the face of the earth. So be sure to see it while you can.

The second Bison inhabits North America, and, like the aurochs, is becoming fewer in number every year.

Yet, not many years ago, it lived in herds which were like the locusts for number, and blackened the country for miles. It seemed as if they were masters of the soil, but now there are so few left that a single bison can now scarcely be seen on the plains where a herd would, within the memory of living men, have been numbered by hundreds of thousands.

There are many reasons why the bison

should have become so scarce. In former days, it only had one real enemy, namely, the red man, and he had nothing but his spear and his bow by way of weapons. So, although he destroyed thousands of bisons yearly, he could not kill more than were born every year, and their numbers were not lessened.

But, when the white men brought fire-arms to bear upon the bison, and killed it by tens of thousands for trade purposes, the animals soon became scarcer. Then, their great feeding grounds were cut up by railways, and occupied by white men's cattle, so that the bison had no chance of living, and failed so fast that in a few years the only living bisons will be those which are kept in menageries.

So, whenever you can see a living bison, make the most of your chance, for in a few years more, the last of its race will probably be dead.

There is another reason for making the most of the bison, for in it is written the history, of the Red Men, or "Indians", as they are usually, but wrongly, called. Still, as the word is in general use, I shall employ it for the sake of convenience.

In order to understand the bison, we must go back some fifty or sixty years in the history of the wilds of North America, before the modern railways were known, before the land was covered with crops, and before sheep, horses and horned cattle occupied the plains. The Indians and the bisons belonged to each other, and the life of the Indian depended upon the bison. He lived upon its flesh, while from its skin he made his houses, his robes, his shoes, and his shields, while even its sinews were needful to him.

Every Indian was therefore a hunter, or he could not have lived, and his weapons were wanted quite as much for killing the bison, as for war.





By MRS. HUTTON.

IT was a tempting little fish !
It was my fav'rite little dish,
So nicely spread, so neatly laid,
I never dreamt of being afraid.

I thought my friends, who're always kind,
"Had set out something to my mind,"
How could I think such cruel snare
Was hidden with such tender care !

My little life had always been
As bright and "happy as a queen,"
I sprung about and jumped with glee,
Sure never cat was gay like me.

And then at night I'd creep to bed,
On Ernest's pillow lay my head,
And cuddle close with all my might,
And hope to stay there all the night.

If exercising after feast,
Is good for man, tis good for beast,
So ere I to my bed do go
My mistress turns me out you know.

The world is large the land is free,
There's room in it for you and me,
Then tell me really, truly, why
You have more right to food than I.



You could not creep through blades of corn,
Not even when you first were born,
Nor eat the rats and little mice
That taste to me so very nice.

And when those brutes devour the seed,
And war produces want and need,
And famine stares you in the face,
You'll rue that you destroyed my race.

I am a lonely little cat,
No mate have I to come and chat,
So it amuses me to go,
To where the Wiske's deep waters flow.

For there the water-rats I see
Swimming with heads erect past me,
And count the dace and other fish
That Ernest eats in breakfast dish.

I'd no idea the game was let,
Or cruel keeper snares had set,
I only do as once I did
Poor innocently injured "kid."

Oh! fatal eve when first I strayed,
Having in garden gaily played,
I now look back on days of yore
Ere I went home all mud and gore.

And while I make my feeble moan
I think of frolics past and gone,
And wonder if I evermore
Shall trot on legs one, two three, four.

Oh! if my little life of glee
Is gone for evermore from me,
And I must limp with leg in sling
Like many another wounded thing!

My bones are bare, the flesh all gone,
The muscles and the tendons torn,
And as it daily hurt me more
My dear, kind mistress' heart grew sore.

And as she could not heal my wound
And wanted me to get quite sound,
She sent her little suffering pet
In to a good, experienced "vet." ¹

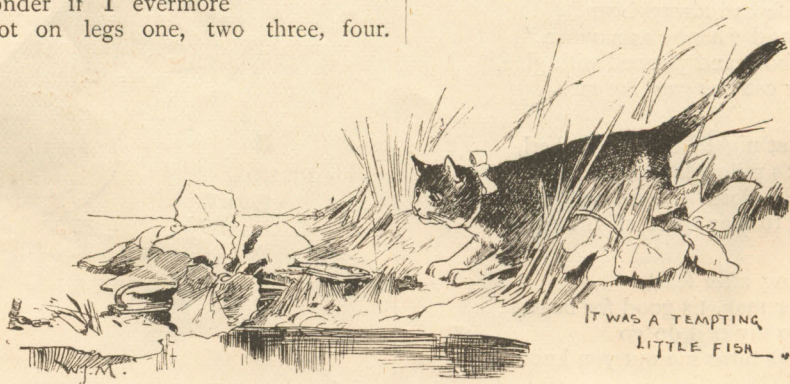
And me he tends with skilful care,
And hopes there really is no fear
That leg of mine will mortify,
But strengthen slowly by and by.

Tis thus I make my plaintive "mieu,"
My tale of sorrow tell to you,
And hope that you will sympathize
With little Dummey's groans and sighs.

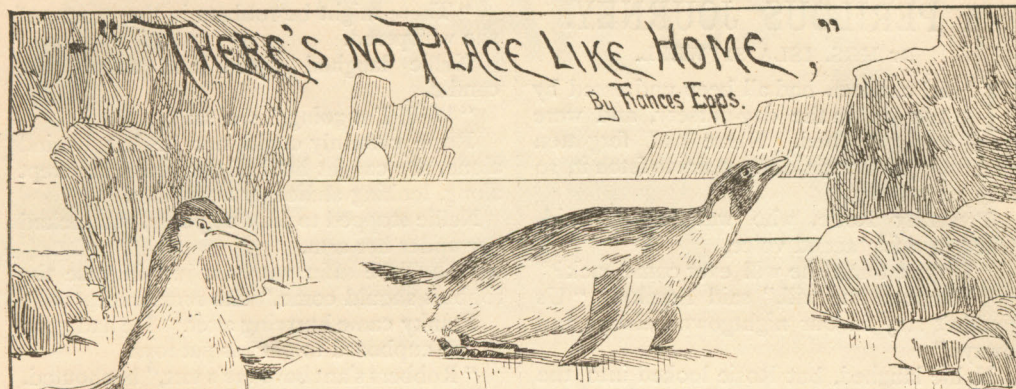
(Signed.)

TWEEDLEDUM WHITE.

¹ Veterinary surgeon.



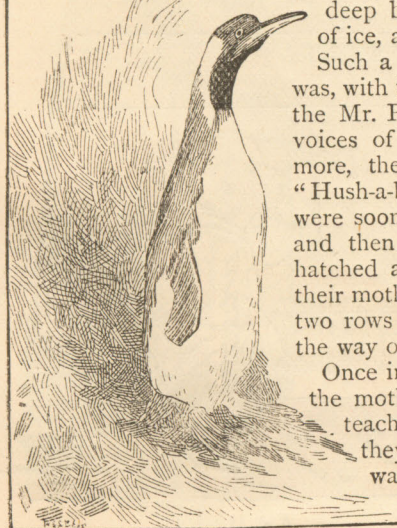
IT WAS A TEMPTING
LITTLE FISH.



"THERE'S no place like home," sang the Penguins one fine spring evening. They had wintered abroad, and were now very tired after their long journey home, having "paddled their own canoe" a thousand miles across the sea with their funny arm-wing fore-feet, resting occasionally on a floating piece of ice. Their oily vests, fitting tightly under their waterproofs, made them float lightly, and they had been cheered on their way by the good news whispered to them by albatross and balmy breeze, that the deep blue waters of their home were free of ice, and full of fresh food for them.

Such a breezy, open, sunny, quiet place it was, with its sheltering old gray rocks. While the Mr. Penguins sang in their sad, harsh voices of their gladness to be home once more, the Mrs. Penguins gently practised "Hush-a-bye, baby." For the simple nurseries were soon built, the pretty round eggs laid, and then dear fluffy baby Penguins quickly hatched and marched down to the sea by their mothers, like a kindergarten, between two rows of fathers, to get them out of the way of the greedy blue foxes.

Once in the water they were safe, and then the mothers had time to admire them, and teach them to swim, fish, and dive. These they did very well, but were certainly backward in singing, walking, and flying.



W. Heydemann

A PERILOUS JOURNEY.

BY MRS. ISLA SITWELL.

THE children had all been undressed by the fire in the day-nursery, and were quite ready for bed. Nurse had forgotten something and went down stairs to fetch it, so they sat waiting.

Presently Rosie, who was rather timid, asked in a frightened voice,

"Do you think she will ever come back?"

"In course she will," said Franky. "Us couldn't stay in our nightgowns always and always."

Nellie laughed, but Rosie looked into the far corners of the room and then she said,

"The candle is getting very small, if it goes out, we shall be in the dark."

"Let's go to bed by ourselves then," remarked Nellie.

"All along the passage!" said Rosie, as if that were something dreadful.

"Well, we must either go or stay," returned Nellie severely.

This was quite true, but Rosie did not like the idea of doing either.

"There might be robbers in the passage," she whispered.

Nellie laughed again and seized the candle.

"Well, I'm going," she said.

Rosie certainly could not be left behind alone, she caught hold of her sister and crept along, looking anxiously about her.

Nellie stopped to pick up pussy, and tucked her under her arm.

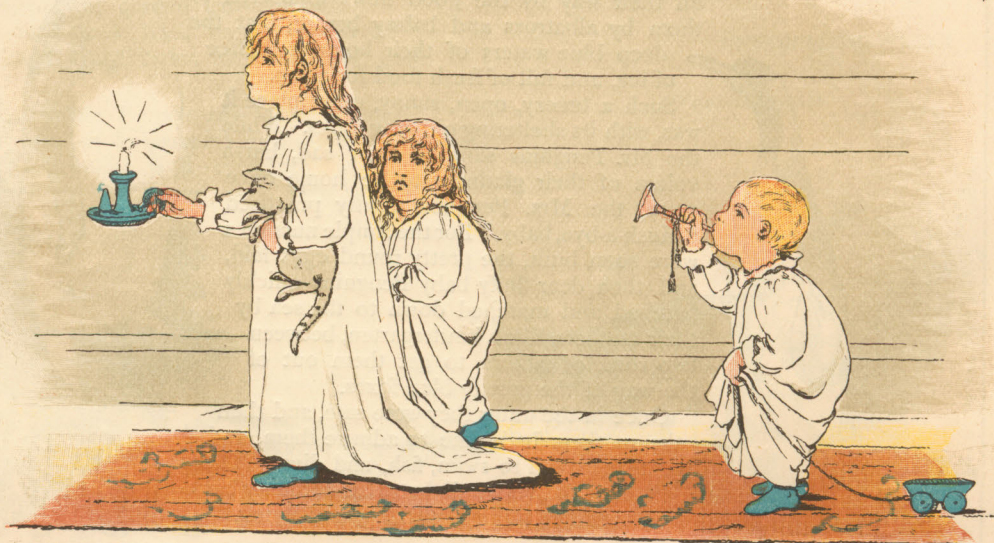
"She'll be safer with us, just in case the robbers should come," she remarked.

Franky came hurrying after. He had gone to the cupboard to get his pet toys.

"Robbers s'ant have me's tart," he shouted. "I's a soldier man, zey'll be frightened of me's t'umpet."

He blew a blast so loud and shrill, that nurse, who had not been gone five minutes, came hurrying up just in time to see the procession disappear.

Listen, little ones. You are not likely to meet many dangers on your way to bed. But if you feel afraid, think of helping some one else, even if it is only pussy, and you will find your fright vanish away.



A.M. Mitchell.



A HOUSE TO LET.

BY MRS. MOLESWORTH.

CHAPTER VII.

A MOUSE CONCLAVE.

THE happy day came to an end at last as all days, both happy and sad, do. But in one way it did not come to an end: indeed its pleasure lasted on for a good many other days to come, for Poppy especially—the telling mother all about it was so delightful.

And another pair of ears besides mother's took it in too. Flip was there, in a corner of the kitchen where no one saw him, listening eagerly. He had missed Poppy the day before, and a great deal of curiosity had been felt by all the Bright-eyes family as to what had become of her, and Flip had run out into the kitchen extra early that morning to find out if she had come back again.

No, Poppy was not there, only her mother who seemed very busy cooking something—*was* she cooking? thought Flip—on the dresser. It must be something very nice, surely; she had such a pleased smile on her thin face. He waited till she went into the next room, a nice airy room behind the kitchen where she and her little daughter slept, and then like a flash of lightning he was up on the top of the dresser, peering about with his gleaming black



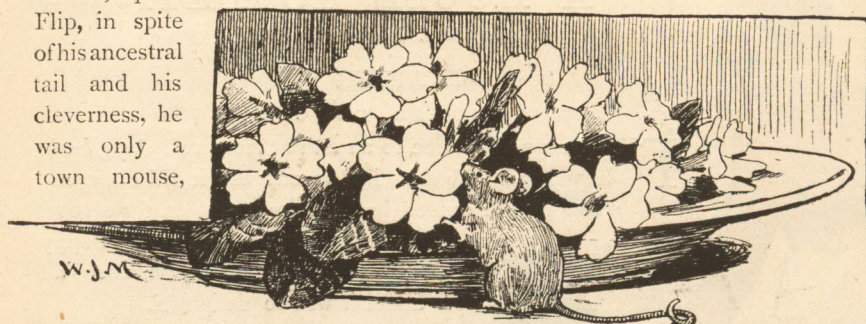
eyes, snuffing about with his sharp little nose, in search of the wonderful dish which had so absorbed the caretaker's attention. There was nothing to smell, *almost* nothing at least, only a faint, fresh perfume which Flip had never come in contact with before, and to *see*, why what was that? A round flat dish, an old soup-plate in fact, filled almost to the outside edge with pale yellow blossoms, bordered by soft green leaves, which Poppy's mother had carefully set round them as a frame. Flip did not call them blossoms and leaves; poor Flip, in spite of his ancestral tail and his cleverness, he was only a town mouse,

into the kitchen; Flip hastily decamped to a shady corner, but not before the caretaker had caught sight of his tail.

"I declare," she said, "if that isn't owdacious! one of those mice of yours, Poppy, a'sniffin' at the primroses."

"Oh, don't touch him, mother," cried the little girl anxiously, not that there was any fear truly of the caretaker's being able to do so! "It's Flip, I'm sure; I dare say he knows I've been in the country. I'm not sure if I told him, but he may have heard us talking about it."

Flip smiled to himself in his corner, and decided to stay and hear



FLIP TASTES THE PRIMROSES

he had never seen the fields and the hedges and had no wish to do so!

"Funny looking things," he said to himself, "they have almost no scent, and I don't *think* they can be good to eat."

He was stepping cautiously along the edge, for he was sharp enough to descry water not far off.

"Let's see," and he nibbled one delicate petal. "Faugh! Horrid, tasteless stuff, what in the world was the silly old woman looking so delighted at?"

Just then Poppy and her mother came

more. But Poppy's mother looked at her rather anxiously: the little girl was rubbing her eyes and her rosy face looked drowsy though smiling.

"My deary, you've not had your sleep out, you're dreaming still," she said.

Poppy shook her head.

"No, I'm not indeed," she said. But seeing that her mother seemed uneasy, she said no more about Flip and his family. "Shall I go on telling you about it all yesterday, mother dear?" she said. "You like that better than my mouse stories, don't

you? But there's mice in the country too, did you know that? Just as there's children in the town and children in the country, you know, mother. It do seem quite natural-like, don't it?"

"Field-mice is not quite the same kind, I don't think," said her mother. "And children is children all the world over, I take it."

"No, no, mother, you're wrong there," said Poppy brightly, "and I can prove it you. Many a time you've said to me I was more like a country-child than a town-child, 'cos of my rosy cheeks. There now, mother."

They had a laugh over this, and then Poppy went on with her glowing account of all she had seen and done the day before, finishing up with the old wish—

"Oh, mother, if we could but go and live in the country, like we used to when I was a baby!"

And Flip listened too, with all his ears.

There was a great discussion that evening in the nest of the Bright-eyes family. It is at night, as perhaps you know, that mice are at their best and sharpest, so all questions

of importance among them are talked over when we, tail-less, two-legged beings are asleep and dreaming, and Flip waited till night to tell his father and mother and brothers and sisters of all the wonderful things he had been hearing and to propose that they should all as a family emigrate to the country.

But Papa shook his head. He thought his son very sharp and clever, but still—

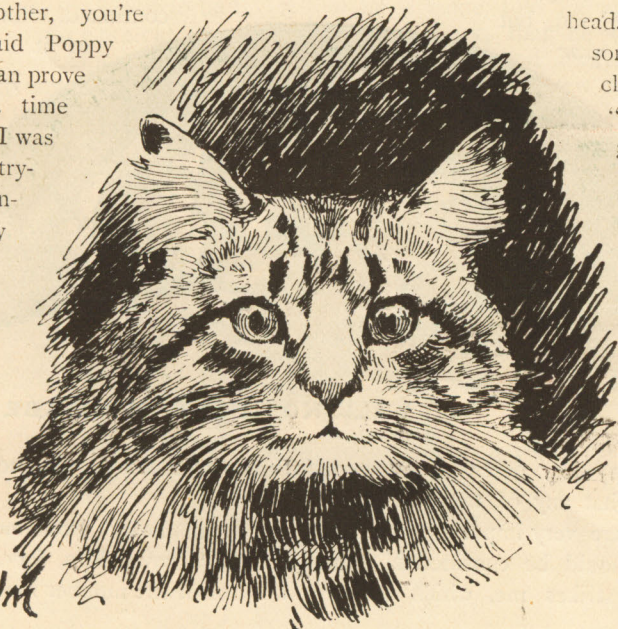
"there is a very great deal to consider and inquire about," he said, "a very great deal. First and foremost what about," and he glanced cautiously around, "about the nameless one in the strange land you speak of?"

"There was no mention of her," exclaimed Flip eagerly.

"I fancy none of that race have

found their way there."

"It is to be hoped so," returned Mr. Bright-eyes solemnly. "But furthermore, my son, what are the resources of the country? Is there cake? Is there biscuit? Are there even such common necessities as bread-crumbs and cheese?"



ONE OF THE
NAMELESS ONES

Flip hesitated, he had not gone into all these matters of detail as yet; no doubt the cousins of whom Poppy had spoken would furnish them with all information. But here his mamma interrupted. She did not feel too sure on that point; there were cousins and cousins, and these country cousins were but distant connections. She remembered, but vaguely only, having heard of them in her young mouse-hood, but certainly not as *near* relatives. Flip began to feel rather small; suddenly a bright idea struck him.

good feeling will force us to give in to. However greatly to our advantage it might be to emigrate, what of our benefactors and friends, Poppy and her mother? Would it not be too ungrateful, too heartless of us to leave them? Think of Poppy's distress!" here his voice broke and his emotion spread to the others. The whole family wept silently. "No, no," Flip continued, "we cannot think of it. I withdraw my proposal. For Poppy's sake, for dear Poppy's sake the



W.J.M.

"WE WILL NOT DESERT NUMBER NINE"

"Permit me, my dear parents," he said. "I do not see that any of the objections you have urged are very important, though of course they should be considered. But a new reflection strikes me, which I fear

Bright-eyes family will not desert number nine."

"Hear, hear," exclaimed the five other voices, "bravo, Flip, for Poppy's sake, we will not desert number nine."

(To be continued.)



THE ZOO.

By THE REV. J. G. WOOD.

Illustrated by HARRISON WEIR.

THE BISON.

IN order to show the uses to which the Indian puts the bison, we will suppose a party of hunters to have killed a number of bison, and to be busy in preparing them.

The great bodies are too heavy to be taken to the village, and so they are cut up on the spot. As the chief use is for food, most of the slain animals are cows, the flesh of the old bulls being, except the hump and tongue, very tough and dry, while that of the young cow is juicy and tender. As, however, the hide of the bull is much thicker and stronger than that of the cow, it is used for native shoes or "moc-casins" as they are called; for strong cords, and especially for the shields on which the Indian warrior depends for his life in battle.

The moccasins are very easily made. The man places his foot on the raw hide, marks its outline, and cuts the skin into flaps, which can be drawn over the toes, sides and heels. Holes are then bored round the edges of the flaps, and thongs passed through them so as to tie the flaps together round the ankles.

When white hunters use moccasins for the first time, they find

that their feet become sore on hard or stony ground. But after a few days they become used to them and prefer them to any boot or shoe. General Maroy, a well known hunter of large game, told me while I was living in New York, that he went on a hunting trip every year, and always wore moccasins, though for the first few days his feet were rather tender. They make no noise in walking, and enable the hunter to approach the game without being heard.

Making a shield however is a long and not an easy task. The shield must be strong enough to resist the thrust of a spear or to stop an arrow. Now the bows of the Indians, though short, are so strong that they will drive an arrow completely through a bison so that it will stick in the ground on the opposite side. The skin alone will therefore not be strong enough to resist an arrow, and something must be done to strengthen it.

So the Indian picks out the oldest and largest bull that he can see, kills it and skins it. Then he cuts a circular piece as



large as the hide will allow, and takes off the hair by soaking it in strong ley made from the ashes of certain plants. Then, while it is soaking, he cuts off the ears, hoofs, and all the little scraps of hide that are not wanted, and boils them into a strong glue. Then he makes a hole in the ground, lights a fire in it, and when there is nothing left except glowing embers at the bottom of the hole, he fastens the hide over the embers and pours hot glue upon it, rubbing it well into the skin.

As it hardens, the skin shrinks, and when the whole of the glue has been rubbed into it, it is only half its former size and twice its former thickness. When made into a shield it will not only resist a spear or arrow, but will turn a rifle ball if struck in the least sideways.

Now for the homes of the Indians. Many of the tribes make their houses of long and slender poles covered with bison skins. The poles are set in a circle, and their ends tied together above. The skins are then fastened on the poles, and the house or "wigwam" is ready for use. This part of the work, is always done by women, who can put up or carry away a wigwam in a few minutes. So these Indians depend on the bison for their homes as well as for their shoes and shields.

Besides, in the cold weather they need warm coverings, and these they make from the skins of the bison, dressing them so that the hair is not removed. The sinews are mostly used for thread, while the largest and strongest are worked while fresh into the backs of the bows, so as to give them the great strength which is needed.

Sometimes when a herd of bisons had been seen on the plains which led to a very deep valley, a large band of hunters would surround the animals on all sides except that which led to the valley. Then they would rush at the herd, shouting, waving their arms and making all the noise in their power. The herd of course ran off on the only path which was left open for them, and, not being able to see in front of them on account of the masses of hair which hang over their eyes, they ran over the edge of the rocks, and were flung into the valley beneath, often more than a hundred feet in depth. Even when those in front tried to check their course,

they could not do so being forced onwards by those behind. More than a thousand bisons have been killed in one of these raids, thus furnishing the Indians with skins and meat which served them for a long time.

The meat is preserved in two ways. The



most usual mode is called "jerking", a word which has been formed from the native word "charqui". After the meat has been taken from the animal, it is cut into long and thin strips, just as an apple is peeled. It is then hung over branches of trees, or on long rods which are put up for the purpose, and is allowed to dry in the sun. It then looks much like leathern straps, and will keep for a long time.

The odd bits, which cannot be cut into strips are sliced, dried, and then pounded into a coarse powder. The fat is then melted, and when boiling, is poured into the

When they go to hunt, each Indian puts on a wolf-skin, and crawls on his hands and knees towards the bison, carrying with him his little bow and a supply of arrows.

Picking out one of the animals, he crawls as near as he can venture, and then sends an arrow through its body. Neither the wounded bison nor its companions have any idea that an enemy is amongst them, and in this way a single hunter will kill the whole of a small herd without being found out. An English traveller, who was watching a herd of bisons through a glass, could not understand for some time why they lay



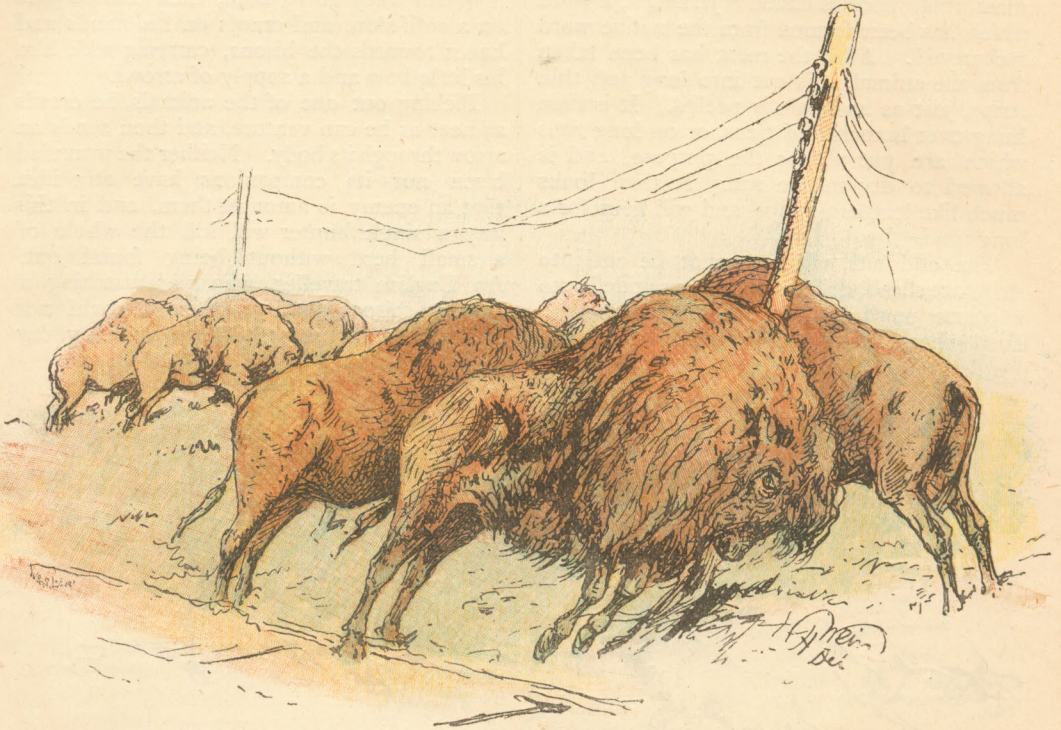
pounded meat, the mixture being called "pemmican," and tied up in skin bags. It will keep for many years, and a small piece of it when put into boiling water, will make a meal.

When no large herds could be seen, the Indians hunted the bison in a very simple and clever manner. Round each herd there are always a number of wolves which look out for any sick or disabled animals. The bisons are so accustomed to the wolves that they take no notice of them. So the Indians kill a few wolves, and dress their skins complete.

down one after another, and did not get up again.

The best part of the bison is the hump, which hunters always call the "fleece". It sometimes weighs a hundred pounds, and, with the tongue, is always secured first.

Still, in spite of the constant slaughter, the numbers of the bison were not much lessened until within the last few years. Then the great Kansas Pacific Railway was driven through their feeding grounds, cutting them in halves. At first, the result of the railway was very remarkable. The bisons got or



the lines and numbers of them were cut to pieces.

They never would move out of the way, and more than once they were so numerous as to throw the train off the line.

Then, for some time they stopped the trains in a very odd manner. Like all the ox tribe, they are fond of rubbing themselves against anything hard, such as a rock or the trunk of a tree. They seemed to think that the

telegraph poles had been put up for their special use, and crowded against them in such numbers that they broke them down and stopped the signals. Then, the railway officials tried to protect the posts by driving long and sharp spikes into them. The bison however were delighted with the spikes, and broke down the posts more than ever.

(To be continued.)



THE LARK'S MESSAGE.

BY KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

IT was such a beautiful day! The sun shone so brightly that the yellow road seemed to gleam, while the grass on the common, and the half-open hawthorn leaves on the hedge beside it, were of the most perfect green. There was a murmur in the air; all the insects in the trees and the hedges, even those hidden among the wild plants

on the hedge-banks, were singing carols this morning—carols of thanks that winter was gone and over, and that warmth and light and colour were going to prevail.

Jack Russell did not feel at all thankful. He walked along the yellow road with his hands in his pockets, and his square face very set and sullen.

Jack felt extremely ill-used; his four elder sisters, who had helped to spoil him, were all in the school-room. Only Maisie was left in the nursery, and she was four—quite two years younger than Jack.

This morning his father had sent for him directly after breakfast.

"Look here, my boy," Mr. Russell said, "I hear that you bully Maisie, and you are rude to nurse. I'm sadly afraid you must be a coward, Jack; only a coward, you know, could tyrannize over a dear little girl like Maisie."

Jack had become so terribly red that his father smiled.

"Well, I make some excuse for you now; the old nurse spoiled you sadly; but there will be no such excuse in future, remember. I hear the new nurse is just and kind too. Let me have a better report of you, old chap, or I am afraid you'll have to go to school."

Jack's face was like a red peony when he came up-stairs.

"Why, Master Jack! have you hurt yourself?" the nursemaid asked him, as she stood on the landing.

Jack gave her a push.

"Don't be so stupid, Susan." He spoke very crossly.

He had now come out for a walk with Maisie and nurse, but he did not say a word to either of them. He felt swelled, as if he were going to burst. Truly Jack wanted to cry, but then he thought it was muffish to cry; besides, Maisie and nurse would have said he was sorry, and he could not bear that.

"I hate that new nurse—she takes Maisie's part. I'll go on the common; she and Maisie can't come there,

because it would mud Maisie's boots—girls are such wretched things!"

He stuffed his hands in his pockets, and crossed the yellow road to the little ditch. He easily jumped this, and found himself on the common among the furze and brake. He looked back defiantly at nurse, but she took no notice; perhaps she thought Jack might find his temper again if he were left to himself.

"Help me pick daisies," she said to Maisie, "and we'll make a daisy-chain."

Jack was soon hidden by the furze-bushes, which looked to him like trees, they were so tall.

He spied out one or two delicate bramble-flowers opening their white petals on long red thorny stems that stretched out from the furze, and he saw plenty of golden blossom



on the gorse itself. Jack pricked his nose in trying to smell it, and all at once a huge humble-bee came buzzing out of the flowers almost into his mouth.

"Why, old fellow," he cried, "I might have swallowed you."

Jack was brave enough, but the idea of swallowing a humble-bee for lunch was startling. He began to look about him, and he saw tiny blue and white and pink and yellow flowers nestling in the grass.

"Why do the flowers go on blooming where no one comes to gather them?" Then he remembered his adventure with the humble-bee, and he said—"Perhaps the flowers bloom for the bees to suck; but then they're not all sucking flowers, I can see that in our garden."

While he stood wondering, the sullen look left his face.

"What's that?" he said suddenly; and he stood still, his feet set wide apart, his blue eyes and his mouth trying to look like round O's while he listened—listened to a sound over his head. He did not feel swelled now; he gave a deep, contented sigh. He had heard a lark sing before, but not often, and he thought the sound was lovely. The Russells had lived in London till last Easter, and in the autumn they had always gone to the seaside. Jack might have heard the lark sing there, but he never cared to go anywhere except on the sands.

"Oh, it's lovely! it is lovely!" The boy's eyes sparkled with delight. "If I could only hear it every day—if I could have one of my own!"

The lark's song came nearer and nearer. Jack put his hand to shade his eyes, and he saw the little brown bird high above him.

"Why does he sing there all alone?—and in this place, too, where no one comes?"

Now the lark's song sounded more faintly, but Jack was determined not to lose it; he plunged on heedlessly among the brambles in hope of hearing it again. He did not

hear nurse call—"We're going in. Come, Master Jack!" he was too intent on following the lark. He had lost it. He could no longer hear the faintest sound of singing, and he sat down sadly to rest under a gorse-bush.

"It's my luck," he grumbled; "everything is against me."

Then a strange thing happened. The lark's song sounded blither than ever, and close beside him. How glad and joyous the sound was! Jack felt heavy-hearted and ashamed; it seemed to him that if he could only throw something away from him, he too should feel gay and happy. He longed to sing with the little brown bird.

As Jack thought this, the lark's gray breast came close to his face, and the bright black



eyes were looking into his; only for an instant. Then far above his head the lark sang again—these were the words it sang.

"My song is praise and thanks and love—praise for the glories of earth and sky, for golden sunshine and freedom and sweet pure air, for sheltering trees, for incense-bearing flowers, for insects that make food for the dear wife and little ones in the nest so far below. Listen, listen to the voices of the flowers! They do not sit in idle beauty on their green stalks; they gladden mortals, and they feed the butterfly and bee. They do more. Listen to their hymn of thankfulness; draw near them and smell their incense of praise. The insects even are not mute; each one of them gives thanks in its own way. There is no murmuring voice. The works

of God from morn till eve give daily praise to the Creator of all."

The song ceased. He cried out and awoke; he felt sleepy and hungry too.

"Why, I believe it's past dinner-time. The sun was shining on my feet, and now he's behind that oak-tree. I'll go home."

He did not easily find his way, but at last he came in sight of the yellow road.

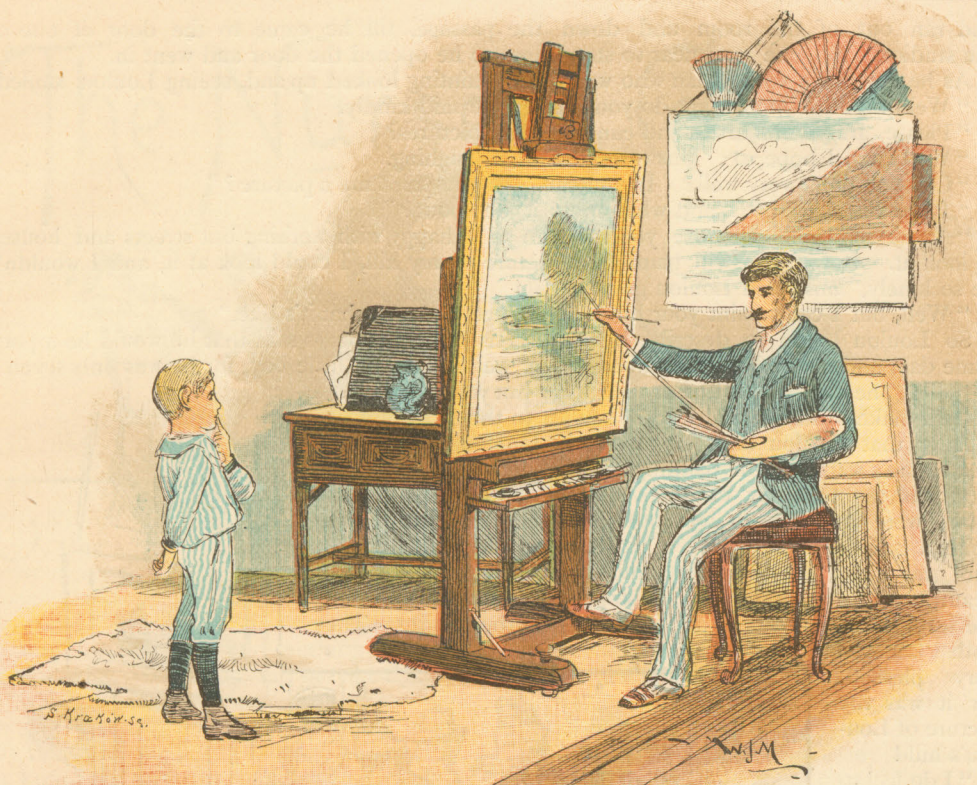
"Jack! Jack!" a voice said; and there, not far off, stood his mother and Maisie.

Jack rubbed his eyes, stared at them, then ran and gave Maisie a hearty kiss.

"My dear boy!" his mother said.

Jack did not let her finish. "I expect I've been lost, mother. Well, never mind, I've got lots to tell you if I can only recollect that lark's message."





LOULOU'S HILL.

By VENETIA GORING.

L OULOU was very much excited. He was going to leave home for the first time in his life, to pay a visit to his aunt, who lived in London.

Loulou's father was very poor, and they lived in a small cottage, not far from a country town.

Round Loulou's home rose the hills. Hills of every shape and form, large and small. But the one which Loulou liked best was a small one, just behind their house. Here he often played with his brothers and sisters, and it is about this hill that I am going to tell you.

The aunt with whom Loulou went to stay, was poor too, she kept several studios, which she let to artists, who used to paint in them all day.

Loulou enjoyed his first week in London very much. His aunt took him to the Zoo, and the Aquarium, and several other places, which she thought a little boy, who had never been in London before, would be sure to enjoy. But after that first week Loulou began to feel dreadfully homesick. He wanted his father and mother, his brothers and sisters, but most of all he wanted to see his dear hill.

One wet afternoon he was standing by the window, looking out at the rain, and feeling very miserable. Suddenly a bright idea struck him. He turned from the window,

and ran out of the room and down the passage, till he came to the door of one of the studios. No one was near to stop him, so he opened the door and went in.

As he entered, a young man who was sitting painting looked up and, seeing Loulou, smiled.

"Well, my little man, what do you want?" he said kindly.

"Please, are you an artist, and can you paint pictures?"

"Well, yes, I hope so;" answered the artist laughing.

"Can you paint very well? If you can, will you paint me a picture?"

"Paint you a picture! and what must it be about?"

"About my hill. Because you see, I'm so unhappy with nothing but streets and houses to look at. But if you will paint me a picture of my hill, I could look at it, and I wouldn't be so lonely," answered Loulou gravely.

"Well, but I can't paint your hill till you have told me what it's like."

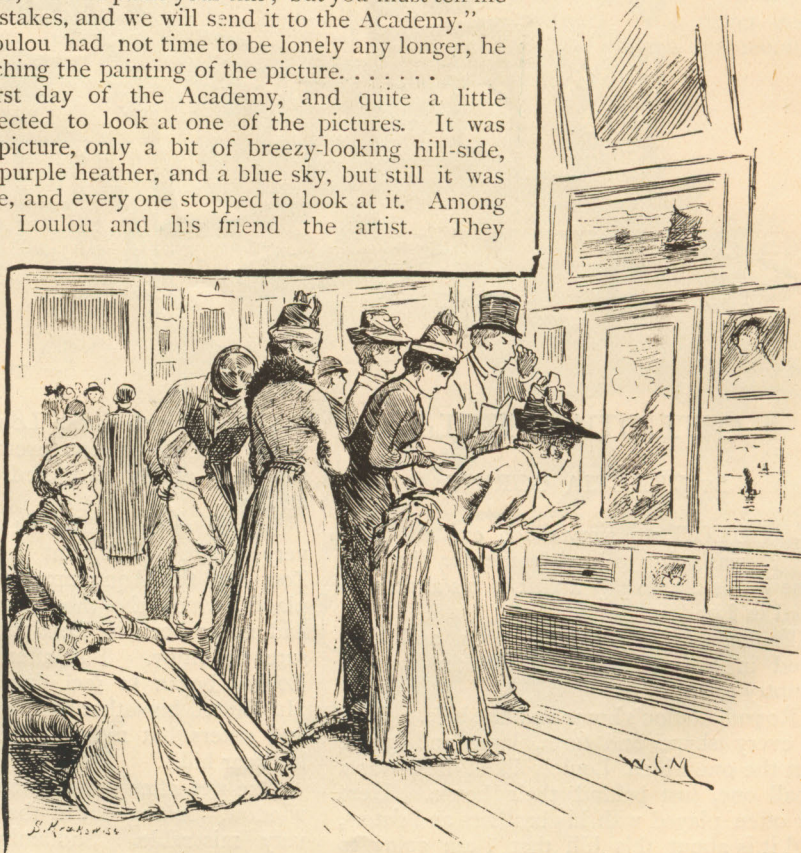
So Loulou began to describe his hill. His brothers always said that he would be a poet some day, and certainly he described it very well for such a little boy, for he was only seven.

"Well," he said, "I will paint your hill; but you must tell me when I make mistakes, and we will send it to the Academy."

After that Loulou had not time to be lonely any longer, he was so busy watching the painting of the picture.

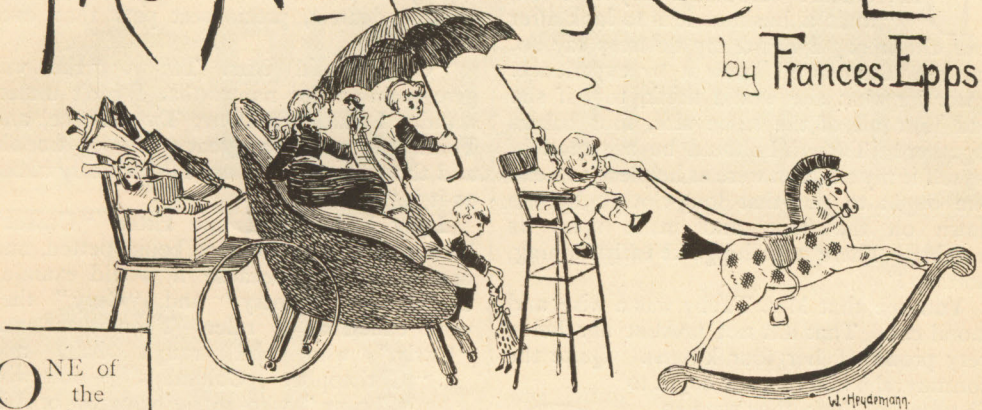
It was the first day of the Academy, and quite a little crowd were collected to look at one of the pictures. It was quite a simple picture, only a bit of breezy-looking hill-side, with gray rocks, purple heather, and a blue sky, but still it was beautiful and true, and every one stopped to look at it. Among the crowd were Loulou and his friend the artist. They both seemed very pleased, for it was the picture of Loulou's hill!

"I do feel so happy!" cried Loulou. "How lovely my dear hill looks, and you are very happy too, are not you? And after to-morrow I won't need to look at my picture hill any longer, because I shall be at home and see the real one. I am so very happy!"



The Nursery Coach.

by Frances Epps.



ONE of the many nice things about

"pretend" games is this—you never have to wait for anything, and nothing happens except what you wish; for fairy-land time, in which of course "pretend" games are always played, is quite different from everyday time, and the fairy clocks go fast or slow, backwards or forwards, just as you please.

Now you will understand how it was that although the family (of dolls, ages nine to twelve) were very ill in hospital with small-pox at nine o'clock, fondly nursed by a mother and two aunts, and doctored (with all his might) by an uncle, still, at half-past nine they are seen taking a drive, perfectly recovered of course, and gone back to long clothes once more, in the care of Lady Lawn-Tennis their mother, Miss Garden-Roller their aunt, and Parkins the nurse. As for the doctor uncle, he was now John the coachman, and looked as if he had never even heard of "camphor-water" and "mus'ard p'asters."

"How good the pretty dears have been," remarked the aunt.

"Yes, indeed, the darlings," answered her ladyship; "and I am very glad, for I am

quite wearied out with getting ready. Did you pack the skit—I mean the bottle of milk, Parkins?" she continued, to the nurse, who was waving to the Japanese figures on the mantel-shelf.

"Her ought to don't take my skittles," grumbled John; then more cheerfully, "I'll take the yuggage out in a minute." Then with a crack of his whip, and a good tug at the reins, which almost turned his horse over, he said firmly, "Now, we're there."

"No, we're not," began Parkins, but Lady Lawn-Tennis and her sister said they had had a most pleasant drive, and felt quite hungry in the fresh air. John quickly tumbled out the luggage (think of the bottles of milk, what a noise!), put the horse in his stable corner, brushed him (with his own brush), tied the comb-bag on his nose, and then sat down to enjoy lunch with the rest—not a "pretend" lunch. After all this, there was still time before dinner for a journey to Persia by three princes (mother, aunt, and coachman) to rescue a fair princess (Parkins), in a dungeon (the coach), and the late patient passengers slept all the while!

Mrs. TABBYS FAMILY.

By MRS. ISLA SITWELL.

"DEAR, dear!" said Mrs. Tabby to herself, "what a business it is to look after four children. I heard my mistress say so, and now I am sure I know it by experience. I wonder what she would think, too, if she had four all of the same size, four babies together! Though I should be ashamed of myself if my children were as helpless as hers. She ought to put that long-clothes bundle down on the floor, and insist upon its walking. There is nothing like early training, nothing!"

You see that Mrs. Tabby was a wise and moral cat. That did not prevent her being very proud of her four kittens. Quite the contrary, she said that she ought to be proud of them, they were so good, and so clever, and so beautiful, and so well behaved. It would have been different had they been squinting little wretches, like Mrs. Black's next door, or ill-mannered creatures like the young Tortoise-shells over the way.

"Our eldest little girl," said Mrs. Tabby, "I mean the daughter of the house, is remarkably sensible, and she quite agrees with me." Mrs. Tabby was justified in saying this, for Lucy said "The Kittens are the dearest, preciousest pets that ever existed."

"Only," said Mrs. Tabby, "she will give them absurd names that I can't understand. I call them One, Two, Three, and Four. It saves a great deal of trouble and thought. I have enough to worry about as it is."

Lucy had named one kitten "Cosset" because it was so fond of being petted, and one "Curious" because it would examine everything: "Cossy" and "Cury" they were called as a rule. Then there was "Curly," who had rough hair, and "Christopher Columbus," otherwise "Chrissy," who made voyages of discovery on wardrobe shelves and into drawers.

They are all gathered round Lucy now, while Mrs. Tabby sits bolt upright, admiring the way in which they learn their lessons. If she looks round, I am afraid Christopher Columbus will get into trouble; for instead of watching the reel, he is trying to catch his own tail which he has just discovered.



A. M. Mitchell.



A HOUSE TO LET.

By MRS. MOLESWORTH.

CHAPTER VIII.

POPPY GIVES AND TAKES ADVICE.



POPPY was sitting alone in the kitchen the next afternoon—that is to say the afternoon but one after the birthday treat—at her knitting as usual. Her mother was out, but she had promised to be home by tea-time.

“I wish she would come,” thought the little girl. “I’ve several more things to tell her that I’d forgotten. How nice it would be to be living somewhere where mother didn’t need to go out all day and leave me alone; I’ll be glad to go back to school again,” and she gave a little sigh. “I wonder what Master Jack and Miss Bessie are doin’ to-day. They said they’d come over to see me soon, but of course they’ve got their lessons to do and a many other things, and it’d never do, as mother says, for me to put myself for’ard too much, though they’ve been so wonderful good to me.”

She was feeling a little dull after the great excitement of the birthday treat and perhaps she was still rather tired with the railway and the exercise in the fresh air, all so unusual in her quiet life. The knitting-needles dropped from her hands, her little round head fell back against the rail of the high, old-fashioned rocking-chair and Poppy was fast asleep.

Suddenly—she sat straight up with a start—something had touched her foot, nay, something was moving right up her leg and—lo! and behold

—a pair of bright eyes were staring up in her face. Flip, tail and all, was sitting on her knee! For half an instant Poppy felt inclined to scream. Even if one is on very friendly terms with mice one doesn't *quite* like to feel them running over one. But before she had time to get her breath for even the tiniest cry, a little voice stopped her.

"Forgive me, dear Poppy, I beg of you," it said. "I would not have taken such a liberty as to run up your leg, had not all other means of attracting your attention failed."

"Dear me," thought Poppy, "how very grandly he talks! I wonder if he goes to school now and learns all those long words there?" But as she was afraid of hurting Flip's feelings she did not say this aloud.

"Never mind," she replied. "I didn't like it much when I felt you on my legs, but if you'll sit still now and not flop about your long tail I dare say I'll get used to you. Why haven't you been to see me for so long—though to be sure," she added, with considerable pride, "I've been away—you didn't know, did you, that I'd been in the country—ever so far?"

Flip gave a superior smile, but I am afraid it was lost on Poppy. It takes a good deal of education to see when a mouse is smiling.

"Oh, dear yes," he said, "I know all about it. I ventured to listen to all you were telling your good mother yesterday, and it gave me great food for thought. In fact—I particularly wanted to tell you about it, that was why I intruded this afternoon—we had a very serious discussion last night as to whether we, the Bright eyes family, might not do well to emigrate ourselves to the country. Hearing of our cousins still being there made us feel we should not be without friends; and there seem to be other advantages. You—you do not appear to have come across any member of the—the family who shall be nameless?" he added, dropping his voice and speaking rather nervously.

Poppy did not immediately reply.

"I'd really like to put him down a little," she said to herself, "he *is* so affected.—well," she added aloud, "and when are you thinking of starting—all six of you, I suppose? And how do you mean to get there? And how would you like sleeping out in the fields and hedges, where it's pretty cold very often I dare say, you that's used to a nice warm kitchen? And how would you do without the scraps and crumbs *we*



give you; I suppose you think you'd get better fare from your grand cousins—eh?"

Flip looked very reproachful.

"Poppy," he said, "you might listen to all I have to tell you. We decided against it. I proposed and it was unanimously agreed that—"and here Flip's feelings became too much for him, he lifted up one paw and wiped his right eye, "that it would be—would be *ungrateful*, Poppy, ungrateful to you and to your good mother who have been kind friends to us, to leave you. No, Poppy, we do not deserve your sharp words—we decided that we would not desert Number 9."

Poppy's tender heart was touched at once.

"Poor Flip," she exclaimed, "I'm very sorry if I've hurt your feelings. But I'm very glad you've given up the idea, for though I wouldn't have mentioned it if you hadn't asked me, for I know you don't like talking about it—at Miss Delia's house, Miss Delia is own cousin to Master Jack and Miss Bessie over the way, and it was her Mamma's house we went to, so I know all about it; well, at her house there's a very big, *very* big—I think they call her a Pushon—or some name like that, a *very* big c—"

"Stop! stop! oh stop! Poppy," cried Flip, and Poppy could see that he was trembling all over, "do not, I entreat of you do not say the word. How thankful, oh how thankful I am that we gave up the idea!"

"Yes, indeed, and so you may be," said Poppy, "For I rather fancy there's more c— more of them about. There's stables you know, and all sorts of farm places and there's sure to be—"

"Say no more,"





"It's BEST TO DO ONE'S DUTY"

sighed Flip. "Ah how I pity our poor cousins!"

Poppy looked puzzled.

"I don't think field-mice are the same," she said. "They live out-of-doors altogether you see—but *you* couldn't do that, Flip, you'd die of cold. Best let well alone."

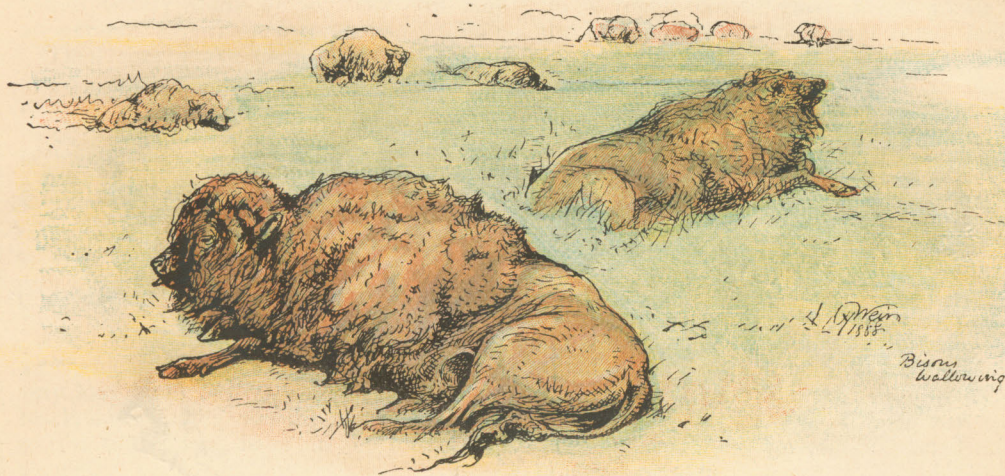
Just then the door was heard to open; the caretaker was coming in. Off darted Flip and Poppysat up and rubbed her eyes. "My deary, have you been taking a nap?" said her mother.

"I don't know," Poppy replied. And after a minute she spoke again, "Mother," she said, "is it wrong of me to want so to go to live in the country? Is it best to be pleased always to stay where one is?"

"It's best to do one's duty, and things gets clear as one goes on," said her mother. "Don't think too much about it, deary. If it came in our way to go back to live in the country, as *was* our home you may say, we'd be very happy I make no doubt. But frettin' for a thing one can't have is wrong. Do your duty and trust as we won't be forgotten. That's what I says to myself," said the poor woman.

And then Poppy and her mother had a cheerful tea together.

(To be continued).



THE ZOO.

BY THE REV. J. G. WOOD.

Illustrated by HARRISON WEIR.

THE BISON AND YAK.

THERE is one strange custom of the bisons which is worthy of note.

It is their habit to make journeys north and south every year, and not long ago they were so numerous that the plains were black with them as far as the eye could see. They pressed onwards, the bulls constantly stopping to fight by the way, and then galloping after the main herds.

They all, whether bulls or cows, had the habit of making "wallows". Like many other thick-skinned animals, the bison is much plagued by insects, and therefore likes to cover its whole body with a thick coat of mud. In the great plains which the bisons traverse there is little mud to be found, but they know by instinct how to make it.

Under the surface of the soil there is in many places some amount of moisture which cannot be seen, but which the bisons seem to smell. As soon as they come to one of these moist spots, they throw themselves down on their sides, and spin round and round. They soon make a shallow hole, into which water begins to make its way, so that in a short time the bison finds enough mud to cover its whole body.

When the herd has passed along, grass always springs up in the wallows and serves the animals with food when they again pass over the same ground. It was found that when on these journeys the bisons returned from the south and came to the railway, those animals which had crossed, and were on its north, took no notice of the trains, but went on their way quietly. Those however who were on its south seemed to be driven mad by the sight of the trains and charged at them, always being killed, and sometimes knocking the train completely off the rails.

The greatest harm however was done by the hunting parties who made a regular business of killing the bisons merely for the



sake of their skins. Each party consisted of shooters, skimmers and a cook. The shooters did nothing but kill, and, as the bison is so stupid an animal, two or three shooters would kill every bison in a herd. The skimmers then set to work, and were so expert from constant practice, that a single man has been known to skin forty-five bisons in one day. So ruthless was the slaughter that in the three years 1872-3-4, four and a half millions of bisons were killed, more than three millions for their skins alone. Lately, even the bones of dead animals have been collected for the purpose of being ground and used as a manure for the cornfields.

Their mode of life is rather peculiar. The cows seem to have but little love for their young, but leave them, to their fate, running away at the first approach of danger. The bulls however appear to have a better sense of duty.

A traveller who was watching a herd of bisons, saw a number of bulls standing in a circle with their heads outwards. They were at some distance from the main body of the herd, and round them were a number of wolves crouched down and watching them.

On going closer he saw that in the centre

of the circle was a very young bison calf, which the bulls were guarding from the wolves. Presently the calf, which was lying down, got up, and then the bulls began to guide it towards the herd. It had to lie down several times, but at last the bulls succeeded in placing it in safety, no wolf ever venturing to attack a herd of bisons.

Like the camel, the bison can live without water for a long time, the cells in its stomach retaining water enough to sustain life for several days.

If a traveller should meet a herd of bisons and not know their ways, he is always afraid that his life is in danger. The bulls come to the front, put their heads down as if they were going to charge, scrape up the ground with their hoofs, and look as if they were going to tear the stranger to pieces. Then they will all at once rush forwards, and if the traveller should be afraid and run away they will run after him. But if he should know their ways and not move, they slacken their pace, and when they have come

within twenty yards or so, they will stop altogether.

Then they shake their heads as if they could not understand what kind of a creature it is which stands so still and will not run away, and then they themselves become frightened, and think that the best thing they can do is to gallop away as fast as they can.

THE last of the oxen which will be described is the Yak, a strange-looking ox which is found in Northern Asia, especially in Thibet.

It is remarkable for the long tufts of hair with which its sides are covered, and the very long and bushy tail. The colour is black, and in some yaks the tail is white, and so is a tuft of long hairs on the top of the shoulders.

In its own country it lives wild in small herds, seldom, if ever, more than one hundred in number and mostly from ten to twenty. It is a great wanderer, feeding

on a rough, coarse grass which grows in the highest valleys, sometimes being found at a height of twenty thousand feet above the level of the sea. It feeds at night, and towards the day-time goes off to some sheltered spot on the steep side of a mountain, and there sleeps for many hours together.

It is easily tamed and is used as a beast of burden, sometimes being saddled and used for riding. When it thinks its load too heavy, it begins to grunt and groan in such a way that a rider who is not used to it cannot endure the sound, and dismounts. The owners however care nothing for the noise, and let the yak groan as much as it likes. On account of this habit the yak is sometimes called the grunting ox.

There are two kinds of tame yaks, one called the noble yak and the other the plough yak, the former having very long side hair a large hump and a large and bushy tail. It



is stronger than the plough yak, but is rather apt to kick and to try to strike its rider with its horns.

The tail of the yak, especially when it happens to be white, is of much value, being made into the fly-flappers called "chowries", which are used as marks of rank in the east. I have no doubt that you have heard of a "Three-tailed bashaw", or pasha, as the word is now spelled. The pashas are of three different ranks, just as are our generals and

no one cares about the looks of a plough yak, and so the owner, as soon as a yak's tail is large enough, cuts it off and sells it. So the plough yak, with its bare sides, drooping head and no tail looks a very pitiful object.

The side-tufts do not begin to grow until the animal is about three or four months old, and up to that time, the young yak is clothed with curly hair, very much like that of a black poodle dog. In 1887 a



admirals, and the number of yak-tails carried on a sort of banner before a pasha denotes the rank which he holds. The hair of the chowries is mostly dyed red.

The plough yak has short legs, scarcely any side tufts, and hangs its head as it walks, unlike the noble yak, which holds its head high, and seems proud of its strength and beauty. But it has a large and bushy tail, which it is seldom allowed to keep after it is full-grown. Tails fetch money, while

baby yak was born in G. Sanger's menagerie at Margate, and a very odd little thing it was until its short curly hair gave way, to the long tufts of the full-grown animal.

When I was last in the Gardens, the fine noble yak came into the middle of the yard, and then stood so still, with his side towards me that he seemed to know that I was admiring him. I wished that I had been able to take his photograph.

(To be continued.)

THE SOUND-SLEEPER OF FIESOLE.

BY KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.



JACK and Maisie Russell had been spending the winter in Florence with their mother; they liked it very much at first, everything was so new and strange, and the sights and sounds amused them; but they began now to wish themselves back in England again. There was lovely country near Florence, but there was nothing at all like an English common. The children longed to see meadows full of buttercups, and the hedges and copses full of singing-birds, near their English home. Jack, above all things, wanted his beloved common, where he could roam about among the gorse, as he pleased, and listen to his friend the lark.

At last a day was fixed for the home journey, and Mrs. Russell asked Jack where he would like to spend his last afternoon.

"At Fiesole," Jack said; "it's ever so much nicer than gardens and places. We can run about and make as much noise as we please in that jolly old circus—can't we, Maisie?"

Maisie was sure to like all that Jack did, and they both enjoyed their drive. The sun was shining; the sky was a bright blue, against which the cypress trees that clothe the hill on which Fiesole stands, looked even darker than usual, while their stems showed out gray and satiny in the brilliant light.

The carriage had to climb the hill slowly; and two dark-eyed, brown-skinned women, with blue and white gowns, and red handkerchiefs over their fuzzy black hair, came grinning up to the carriage, showing their white teeth, and asking Jack and Maisie to buy their wares.

One woman held up such pretty baskets made of tawny, finely-woven straw, gaily lined with red and blue satin; the

other girl had some fans, which she kept opening and shutting, chattering Italian all the time.

Jack and Maisie could make out a good deal she said, but not all, and they laughed when she told them they were "as beautiful as the angels."

"Sorry I can't return the compliment," Jack said, as he and Maisie laughed and kissed their hands to the straw-sellers.

They amused themselves to their hearts' content in the old amphitheatre, while their mother sate reading under the screen of bushes at the top. Jack showed Maisie the dens where the lions and tigers were kept before they were let loose in the arena. He had shown her these dens on his last visit, and had told her a terrible story of a martyrdom which had not really happened at Fiesole, but in the Coliseum at Rome.

Maisie had been woefully frightened; and now, when Jack began to tell the story again, she began to tremble.

"Please don't say what the lions did, dear Jack, please don't; it's so awfully horrid—please."

Jack shrugged his shoulders and sighed.

"You are seven now, Maisie," he said

severely; "you really ought to care for history. I believe you like baby stories still. Hulloo! what have you found, eh?"

For Maisie, who usually listened dutifully to Jack's lectures, had pounced down on one of the gray stone steps that reach from the top to the bottom of the amphitheatre.

As Jack ended she looked up, and held out to him a pale-yellow snail-shell. It was a beautiful shell, a pale-gold colour, with a faint brown line going round it.

"That's a lucky find," Jack said; "I am glad. I was just wondering what we could take for a keepsake from the dear old place. That is jolly, Maisie! Mother never likes us to take bits; she says if every one took a bit of stone or brick, the old places would soon get carried away altogether. Come along, we'll show her your snail."

Jack's plan was to gum the snail-shell on to a card,

but his mother suggested that it would travel more safely packed in cotton in a little box, which she gave Maisie for the purpose when they got back to Florence.

"I tell you what"—Jack looked very excited, he had seen the snail duly packed—"it



is not empty, Maisie, because it is not transparent; but the snail in it is quite dead, because it is so light. Now, look here, Maisie—it is such a pity you don't care for history—I've got such an idea,—that snail-shell is the tomb of our snail, because it lies dead in it. Well, then, do you recollect the maidenhair roots which the boy gathered for mother at the Etruscan tomb where we saw the Gorgon's head, and you cried because there was a snake coming out of the wall?"

Maisie nodded.

"I thought it was real," she said; "I shouldn't have cried if I'd known. Father told me afterwards it was only a lamp-holder."

"Well," Jack went on, "mother's going to grow the maidenhair under glass, and I vote we put the snail-shell in among it, and call it an Etruscan tomb. I'm sure it's a very ancient snail," he added gravely.

They thought London looked very dirty after Florence and some of the other cities they had visited, but they were overjoyed to find themselves once more in their country home. The trees were just bursting into

leaf, the birds were in full song, and the woods and copses showed a carpet of violets and wood anemones; here and there the primroses opened their flowers to welcome the children to England.

Jack had watched the planting of the maidenhair with great interest, and he had

carefully hidden the golden snail-shell among the fronds.

"It is just like the Etruscan tomb," he said to Maisie; and Maisie looked at him with admiring wonder. She thought no one had ever been so clever as Jack.

They soon forgot all about the Etruscans, and the snail-shell too in the delight they took in their country rambles.

They had been at home two months; breakfast was just over, and Jack and Maisie were following

Miss Keith to the school-room, when their mother said—

"Look here, children!"

Mrs. Russell was bending over the bell-glass which covered the Italian maidenhair. Jack bent over it too, and he and Maisie both cried out—

"Oh!"



That's a lucky
find' Jack said

For there, moving up the side of the bell-glass, was their golden snail-shell, drawn by a delicate gray-coloured snail with prodigiously long horns. He was travelling fast, as if he felt how far he was from his native country, and was in a hurry to get back.

Jack whistled, and Maisie said, "Only fancy, mother, how he has slept!"

"I say, Jack," she said, presently, "he's spoilt all the history; he can't be a dead

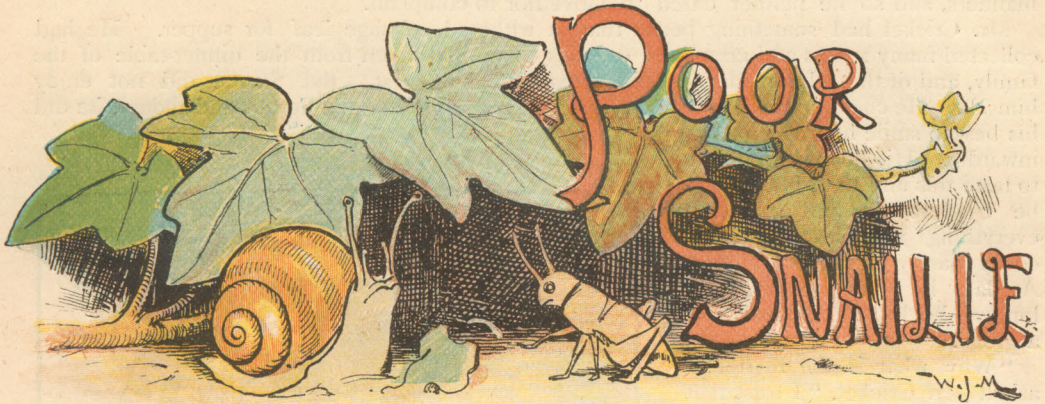
Etruscan, you know, nor his shell can't be a tomb either, if he's alive and crawling."

Jack looked perplexed.

"Well, I suppose it can't be helped; but it has spoiled my idea," he said. "But then, Maisie, you see, that old snail really never was an Etruscan, because he was born in

Tuscany. I'll tell you what we'll do—we'll keep him under the glass, and we'll always call him, 'the Sound Sleeper of Fie-sole.'"





By F. SCARLETT POTTER.

POOOR Snailie lived in the ivy which grew against the house, and a very slow, humble creature he was: not at all like Mr. Cricket, who was lively and noisy, and thought a great deal of himself.

It was evening, and Mr. Cricket had hopped out of doors for a stroll. He chirped as he went. It was his way to be always singing. He had a loud voice, and in his own opinion a fine one; though some people, especially the birds, thought otherwise.

He passed by where Snailie was crawling. Snailie thought what a handsome, active gentleman he was, and, as he never sang himself, he had no motive for thinking badly of Mr. Cricket's singing. To him it seemed very nice. He stopped to listen; and making a low bow, he ventured in his timid manner to tell the singer how much he admired it.

Mr. Cricket had despised poor Snailie; but, like other vain people, he loved to hear his own praises. He now felt quite kindly towards him, and answered so civilly that Snailie ventured to ask him to step into his house, which was close by.

It was a cold, damp corner of the ivy in which Snailie lived, for he liked to be cool

and moist. He felt Mr. Cricket's visit to be a great honour, and invited him to share his supper, which happened to be a bit of a cabbage leaf. The visitor could not eat cabbage, and hated damp and cold; yet he was very polite. He said that he had already supped, and that he had important business on hand, and so made his visit as short as possible. Before he went however he asked Snailie to come and see him in return.

"Not a bad sort of fellow," chirped Mr. Cricket as he went, "and he has the good taste to admire my singing. Poor Snailie! I'll entertain him well, and let him enjoy a really good fire for once."

Of course poor Snailie was only too proud to visit his grand acquaintance. Before he went he made himself as smart as he could, and polished his shell till it shone again.

No one can say that he had not a warm welcome; Mr. Cricket lived under the fire-place, and though the family were gone to bed, there was still a glorious bank of embers; and as he loved warmth himself, and he wished to make his guest comfortable, he popped him into the very hottest seat of all. Poor Snailie found this very disagreeable,

but he was shy, and unused to visiting in grand houses, and afraid of showing bad manners, and so he neither dared to move nor to complain.

Mr. Cricket had something better than a withered cabbage leaf for supper. He had collected many scraps and crumbs of dainties which had fallen from the dinner-table of the family, and of these he made a grand spread for his guest. But Snailie did not enjoy himself. He could not relish the fine supper. He grew hotter and hotter, and though he did his best to smile he was groaning inwardly. His host invited him to taste this and that, but though he tried to eat, and said that everything was very nice, he could hardly swallow a morsel. At last he could bear it no longer—he leant back and gave a groan.

"Why, what is the matter?" asked Mr. Cricket. "I trust that nothing you have taken has disagreed with you?"

"Oh, dear, no, quite impossible; but I am not well. I think I had better go."

"I hoped you would have stayed for a long evening," said the host, "and we would have had some music. I fear you have not enjoyed yourself."

"I have enjoyed myself very much indeed," groaned poor Snailie, "but please excuse me now. I—I feel very unwell."

So poor Snailie went: but he never reached home. He had been so much roasted that he could only crawl half way across the floor, and there he lay till morning. When the maid swept the room she found him, and picking him up with the tongs, she popped him into the fire. That was the end of him.

On the whole he would have done better to have been contented with more humble friends.



AND THAT WAS THE
END OF HIM.

HIS FIRST BIRTHDAY.

HIS birthday party was a very large one : not of little children, but of grown-up relations, grandmother, uncles, aunts, and cousins. If you had seen them arriving, I think you would have admired the beautiful embroidered coats and dresses they all wore, and you would have been much surprised at the ladies' poor little feet, on which they could scarcely totter. When they were little girls of six, their feet had been tightly bound up so that they might not ever be longer than three inches ! They are bringing lovely presents for the baby-boy : silver charms and images to string on a red cord for his neck, cakes and sweetmeats, bright money on a string, and lovely embroidered shoes, some with a cat's head on them, to express the hope that the little toddling wearer would soon be as sure-footed as pussy.

Neither baby, nor his mother, nor any of the ladies will have any share in the long birthday feast, with its hundreds of dishes, eaten with chopsticks instead of knives and forks.

Ladies seldom appear in public in China, and lead very quiet, dull lives.

Baby no doubt will have a nap while the gentlemen are feasting, for he has something very important to do afterwards. He has to decide

what he will be when he is a man, and he will do it just as recklessly as his little English brother of three, who tells you he is going to be a soldier, or a driver, or a "cler'jum," all at once. "Little Stupid," for that is his name, given him by his parents because they think he will be safer if they give him an ugly name, looks a dear little pet, as he is held on a table, dressed in a beautiful scarlet coat, with his funny shaved head, and the tiniest beginning of a pig-tail, and the black eyes sparkle as his fat little hand, (bound at the wrist with a red cord, to insure his being a good boy !) grasps at what pleases him most amongst the things hanging near him. If at the string of money, he will be a merchant, if at the button and necklace he will be a scholar and great man like his father : all the relations are delighted if these are his choice.

I expect "Little Stupid" is ther kneels down and smells, not kisses, the soft little cheek, and murmurs once more, "May all you wish be yours."

F. EPPS.



A LONG WAY ROUND.

BY MRS. ISLA SITWELL.

MARJORIE AND KITTY lived in London, but in the summer they went to the country to an old farm-house. It was so delightful to be able to run about just as they liked and gather great bunches of flowers.

They were never happier, though, than when they sat in the deep porch playing with the cats. Old puss and her two children, who were nearly as big as their mother, and quite as good-natured, though not at all as sedate.

One day they were told of a little girl in the village, who was ill in bed. Her mother was obliged to go out to work, so she had to lie alone for hours with nothing to amuse her.

Marjorie and Kitty brought toys and picture-books, and begged mother to take them to the poor little girl the very next day.

But some time after she had gone, as they were playing together, Kitty said,

"Wouldn't zat little girl like to see ze pussies?"

"Yes, she would," replied Marjorie starting up. "Let's take them to her."

Marjorie took Mrs. Puss and one of the kittens, while Kitty cuddled the other in her arms. It was very comfortable, but those that Marjorie carried had not quite such a pleasant journey.

It was hot and the children got tired with walking, but still they went on.

"Shall us ever get zere?" asked Kitty anxiously.

"If we don't, we shall get home again if we go straight on," replied Marjorie. "The earth is round you know;—but these cats do get heavier and heavier."

"Will it take long to get round?" inquired Kitty.

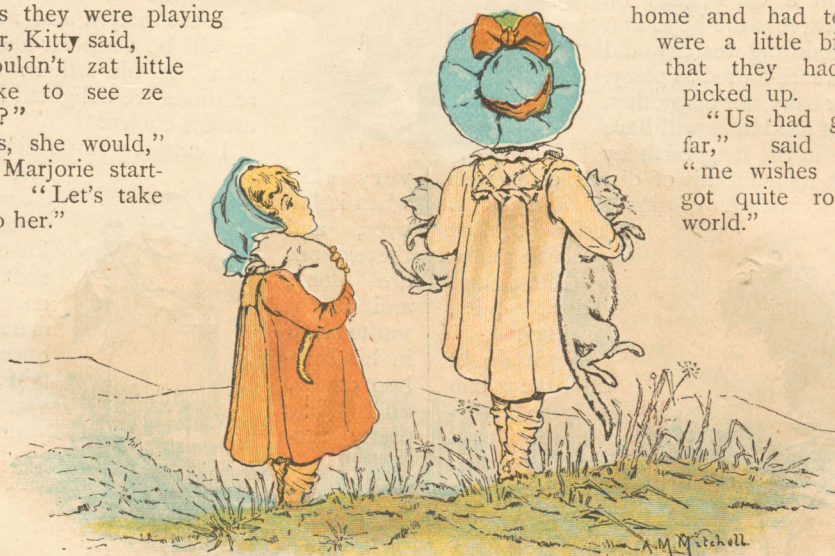
"We shall see," returned Marjorie.

They did not see that day however; for up came the farmer driving a cart; he stopped to ask the little girls where they were going, and then took them in, cats and all, and drove them back again.

"Another day," he said, "I will take you to see little Mary. You were going quite a wrong way."

When the children had got home and had tea, they were a little bit sorry that they had been picked up.

"Us had gone so far," said Kitty, "me wishes us had got quite round ze world."





A HOUSE TO LET.

By MRS. MOLESWORTH.

CHAPTER IX.

BAD NEWS.



A DAY or two after Poppy's conversation with Flip, there came a particularly bright and sunny morning. Such mornings, in London especially, are rare in early spring-time.

"It does one good to see the sun shining so," said the caretaker, as she set off on a day's charing. "You might bring your work and sit on the top of the area steps a bit, Poppy, if you put your little shawl on, after you've tidied up."

"Yes, mother, and may be I'll see Master Jack and Miss Bessie if they pass. Such a fine morning they're pretty sure to be goin' out for a walk early," the little girl replied.

She was not mistaken. Just about eleven o'clock, when she and her knitting needles were comfortably settled on the top step, the door of the house opposite opened and the usual little party sallied forth. Jack and Bessie were across the street in an instant.

"Good morning, Poppy," they both exclaimed. "We've been so wanting to see you. Were you very tired the day after our birthday?"

"I was a bit sleepy," Poppy answered, her round face broadening out into a smile, "but what did that matter? Oh, Miss Bessie, but it was a beautiful day! I'll never forget

it—no never. I've been wantin' dreadful to see you to tell you again how I did enjoy it!"

"I am so glad you did," exclaimed Bessie, and Jack joined in of course.

"You'll have some more treats like it some day p'raps," said he in his slow way. He was not near so quick as Bessie, though he was a year older. "When we go to the country—we always do, you know, about July or August, isn't it Bessie?—we're going to ask Mamma for you to come there, aren't we, Bessie?"

"Oh I do hope it'll be in my holidays," said Poppy, clasping her hands together, "Do you think it will, miss? For I'm goin' to school again now reg'lar. I'm to begin on Monday."

But their plans were just then interrupted by the voice of the under-nurse who had joined them. She had got little Leonard, the baby but one, by the hand this morning, for it was so fine and dry nurse thought it would do him good to walk, and *the* baby was having an extra long sleep, and was not therefore ready to come out so early.

"Is your mother in, Poppy?" Carter asked, and on the child shaking her head, "Will she be in to-morrow?" the nurse went on, "no I don't mean to-morrow, for that's Sunday, Monday, I should say?"

"Yes," Poppy went on, "sure to be. She ain't a goin' out so much now, for you see I'm goin' to school, and it don't do to leave the house too much. Yes, I know mother'll be in all Monday."

"That's all right then," said Carter.

"I had a sort of a message for her, but if she's to be in on Monday, there's no need to explain. It'll be all right."

"The child wouldn't understand, the ladies will tell her mother themselves," thought the nurse to herself, in which she made a mistake, not knowing how very "understanding" Poppy was. And this mistake of hers caused a good deal of sorrow that might have been avoided.

Then the children bade their little friend good-bye and went on for their walk, leaving her with new fancies out of which to spin pleasant day-dreams.

"To go down to see them in the country again," thought Poppy. "Oh, I do hope it'll be in my holidays. I'll work my best at school, that I will, so as I'll deserve a treat if it comes, as mother says."

And full of these good





"Poppy RAN
CHEERILY HOME"

resolutions, the little maiden set off for school on Monday morning. She was a favourite there, for she was both quick and willing, and she was pleased to find herself put back in her former place, even though she had been three months absent.

"You were well on for your age before you were away, Selina," the teacher said. "I should be sorry to put you back. If you can work a little extra at home for a week or two, I think you may keep up. Your eyes are quite well again?"

"Yes, ma'am, only mother won't let me use 'em much by candlelight. I do my knitting mostly of an evening."

"That's right. But the days are getting longer now. You'll have plenty of time by daylight for all you need to do."

Swinging her bag of books, little Poppy ran cheerily home. It was nice to know mother would be there. What had the nurse asked if she'd be in for? she wondered. She had forgotten about it till now,

and she had not told her mother. But the nurse had said it didn't matter—perhaps it was just that Bessie's mamma was coming over to speak to the charwoman, as she had done before.

Yes, mother was there; the door was opened as soon as Poppy knocked. And mother smiled and listened to all the child had to tell, so that for a moment or two, Poppy did not notice that she was pale and her eyes rather red, as if she had been crying a little. But as soon as she did see it she flew to her mother and kissed her.

"Is there anything the matter? Are you ill, dear mother?" she asked anxiously.

"No, no, deary," said the poor woman, trying to smile and checking back the tears, "it's downright ongrateful of me, it is, to make a trouble of what was bound to come. I should be thankful for the good it's done us, you 'specially, Poppy. You're not to say the same child as when we came here, and—"

Poppy's rosy face grew pale too.

"I know," she said, "the house is took."

Her mother answered more brightly.

"Not to say *took*, but it looks like it," she said. "But, Poppy love, we mustn't make a trouble of it, we mustn't indeed. There's been some ladies to look at it, and by all I



"I KNOW SHE SAID "THE HOUSE IS TOOK"!

could hear they liked it very much and said it seemed just the thing. They were very civil to me and give me a shilling for my trouble—real ladies they was. But of course I couldn't have axed no questions as to when it'd be for, and such-like. We'll just have to cheer-up and make the best of it. I'll step round to the agent's in a few days, if I don't hear nothing, and find out, and if it's got to be, we must look out for a nice little room again, or maybe two."

"Will you go back to Smith Street, do you think, mother?" asked Poppy in a voice which she vainly tried to keep from trembling.

The caretaker shook her head.

"I don't think Smith Street was healthy,"

she said. "No, I'll try and find somewhere nicer. And who knows—I might get another house to keep. The agent knows I'm trusty and careful."

"But not far from here, mother," said Poppy. "I'd never see Master Jack and Miss Bessie if it was far."

Her mother promised to do her best. But they were both very sad, poor things. Curiously enough Poppy never thought again of the nurse's undelivered message—it never struck her that it could have anything to do with the visit of the stranger ladies to see the house.

(To be continued.)



HILDA'S CARRIAGE,

BY

C. SELBY LOWNDES.

" I WISH I hadn't hurt my foot ; and I wish the school-treat had not been fixed for to-day ; and oh, I wish Mamma was at home and everything quite different ;" and Hilda, quite exhausted with this long list of wishes, gave a deep sigh.

Poor little Hilda ! It was very trying for her to have to spend this lovely summer day on the sofa, when all the others were enjoying themselves at the school-treat ; and what made matters worse was, that it was her own fault that she had hurt her foot. Three days before, in her anxiety to know if there was a letter from Mamma, who had gone to see grandmamma, who was ill, Hilda had run down stairs with bare feet ; a thing strictly forbidden by nurse, and the consequence of this wild run was that Hilda caught

her foot on a nail, and hurt herself so much she could not put her foot to the ground.

It was with a very mournful look Hilda lay and gazed out of the window, and tried to imagine how delightful everything must be in the rectory garden where the treat was to take place.

Suddenly a bright, cheery voice was heard shouting through the house, "Carrie, Tom, Hilda, where are you all ?"

"It's Bob," exclaimed Hilda, sitting bolt upright in her delight ; then as the door was thrown open she added, "Oh, Bob, darling, how did you come ?" and she stretched out her arms lovingly to her brother.

"I thought I'd take you all by surprise. But where are all the others ? And you have been crying, oh, Hilda, in disgrace ?"



W.J.M.

HILDA'S CARRIAGE.

he asked, and I am sorry to say he actually laughed as he spoke.

"It's my foot," and she stuck out a poor little foot wrapped up in a handkerchief. "And Bob it's the school-treat; they've all gone, and I am all by myself, 'cause Mamma's away."

"Yes; I know she is, I heard from her; and so the poor little woman can't go to the treat!"

There was silence for a moment; Hilda nestled close to Bob as she whispered, "Are you going to the treat too?" She couldn't help the tears filling her eyes as he answered,

"Yes; of course." Then came, "And you are going too."

"Me! Oh, Bob, how lovely! but my foot. I must not walk."

"Then you shall drive."

She gazed at him in wonder and admiration; was there ever such a delightful brother as this? In Hilda's eyes he was the finest and bravest officer in the Queen's navy; for Master Bob was a midshipman, and a very fine young midshipman he looked, with his bright merry face, as he stood beside Hilda's sofa and said, "Now, then, I must be off and order your carriage;" then he turned and left the room before Hilda had time to ask any questions.

"What can he mean to get? Oh, how nice the world is now!" Then with a happy laugh she added, "Won't nurse and everybody be surprised to see me!"

In a few minutes Anne, the maid, came in with Hilda's outdoor things in her hand. "I've come to dress you, Miss Hilda, dear, while Master Bob has gone to get the carriage ready."

"Do you know what carriage he has got? Is it the fly that brought him from the station?"

Anne laughed, "He walked from the station."

"But you know, Anne, you laughed; oh, do tell me," she coaxed; but all in vain.

Then Bob's voice was heard calling, and Anne lifted Hilda in her arms and carried her down stairs. In front of the hall door stood Bob, and beside him was Hilda's carriage. At sight of it Hilda gave a loud "Oh," then went off into a peal of laughter, in which all the others joined, for not only had the women servants come to see her off, but the old gardener too. How they all did laugh at the carriage Bob had prepared! And what do you think it was? "The wheelbarrow." In it Bob had placed a soft bright rug and some cushions. When Hilda was seated in it

Anne tucked her well up in a shawl and asked if she was comfortable.

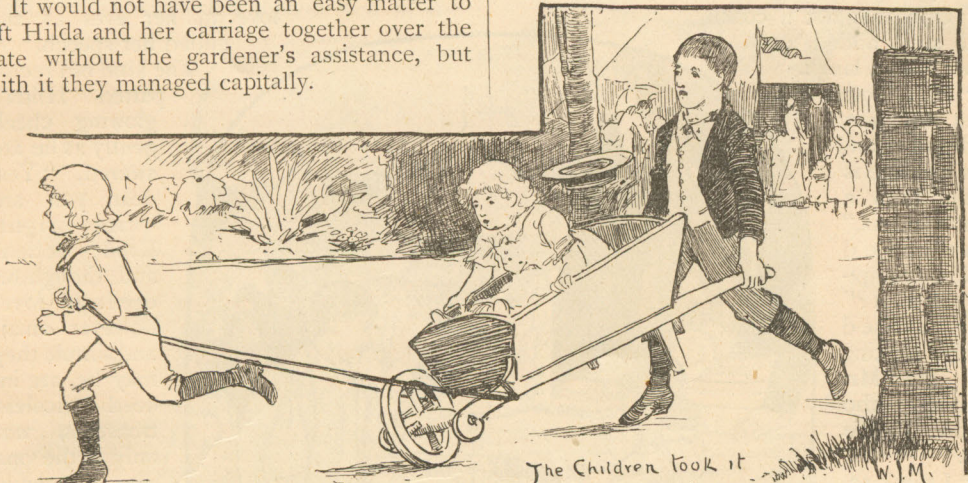
"Oh, it's lovely, it's the nicest carriage in the world."

"Ready, ma'am?" asked Bob, and then away they started, Bob wheeling it in splendid style.

"I'd best see you through the field, for the gate's locked," said the gardener; "and I'd go slower, Master Bob, for a barrow is a jerky sort of conveyance in my opinion."

It would not have been an easy matter to lift Hilda and her carriage together over the gate without the gardener's assistance, but with it they managed capitally.

laughed at Hilda's fine carriage; but everybody agreed in thinking that it was a very clever idea of Bob's. The rector himself acted coachman and drove Hilda's carriage up to the long tables, down each side of which were seated bright, happy children; and although Hilda was not able to run about and wait upon them, as she would have liked, she thought herself so fortunate in being there at all, she had neither room in her heart



The Children took it
in turns to have a drive

As they drew near the gate of the rectory, the sound of children's voices singing was heard through the soft summer air.

"They are singing the grace," said Hilda, as Bob stopped to listen as she spoke. Bob lifted his cap reverently, and Hilda folded her hands, and both brother and sister joined in the song of praise and thanksgiving.

"Hold on tight, Hilda, and we will arrive in style," said Bob as they came to the turning in the carriage drive close to the front door.

How surprised and amused every one was when Hilda and Bob made their appearance can well be imagined, and how every one

nor time at her command to wish for anything more. When tea was finished, and the tables cleared away, so many little boys and girls gathered round Hilda's carriage, and wondered what it would feel like to drive in such a wonderful carriage, that Hilda was lifted out and sat in a chair, while all the children took it in turn to have a drive. Of course it was not a bit like the wheelbarrows they were accustomed to, for this one was so pretty and comfortable, and not hard and stained with work, like those that "father used."

Then Hilda took her place again among

the cushions, and had all the toys and books that were to be given as prizes for the winners of the games and races placed beside her, and was allowed to hand to each happy winner his prize.

At last came the words, "Time to go home" from nurse, and the children had all to be prepared to start under nurse's care; this time the little troop was headed by Hilda in her carriage, with brother Bob as coachman.

"He is as good as a fairy godmother, Hilda," said a young friend who stood near.

"Only it is not a coach and six," added another with a laugh.

"He's better than any fairy godmother, and this carriage is better than a coach and six," answered Hilda promptly. "Isn't it?" she added softly, looking up at Mr. Sumner who stood beside her.

"I think so, dear, but why do you? I should like to know your reason."

Hilda whispered softly, "Why? he's my own brother, and he did it all himself. He took all the trouble and went and got the wheel-barrow and made

it comfortable for me, and drove it here himself, although he was so hot. Now the fairy godmother had no trouble at all, she just waved her wand and it was all done, and," she added in a hesitating way, "don't you think the fairy godmother might have let Cinderella stay longer than twelve? And it must have been horrid to run back all by herself in the dark. Bob wouldn't let me do that. He has waited till quite the end of the treat, and he's going to take me home himself," and there was a glad ring of triumph in Hilda's voice and a proud look of love in her eyes as she ended her speech.

The kind old rector patted Hilda's glowing cheek gently as he answered, "Yes, dear, you are quite right. Kind actions and thoughtful deeds of love, however small and simple they may be, are indeed priceless treasures, not only to the one who receives them but to the giver himself."

"And," interrupted a small child eagerly, who had been listening intently to every word, "And Hilda's carriage won't turn into a pumpkin, but it will

last her until she gets safe home. Yes, I am quite sure that it's much nicer than that stupid old pumpkin."



THE ZOO.

ANTELOPES—ELAND, KOODOO,
NYLGHAIE, ORYX, BEISA, ADDAX.

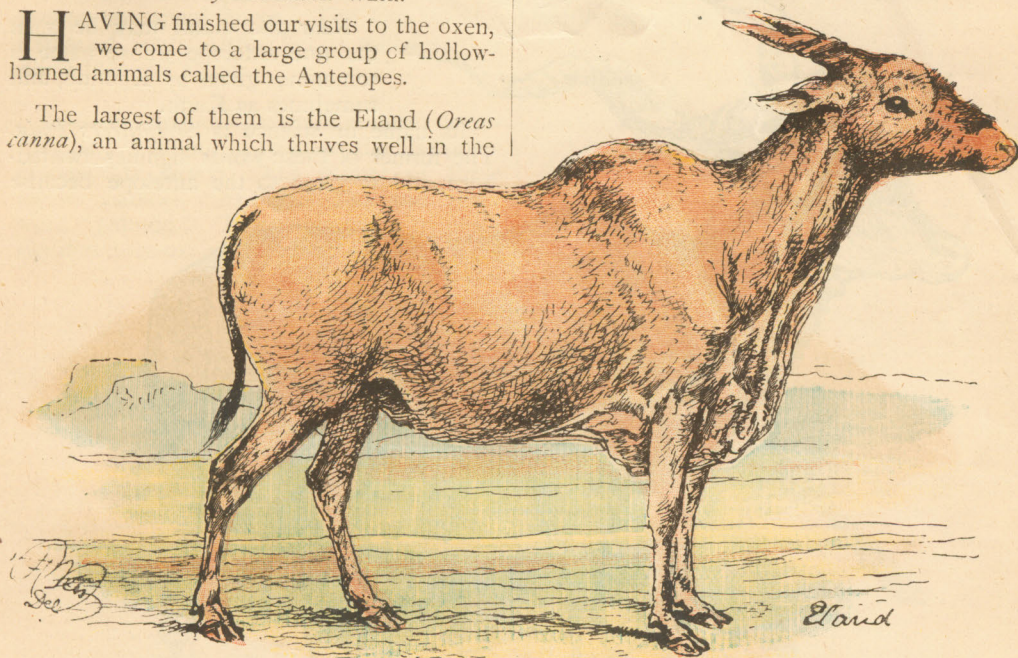
BY THE LATE REV. J. G. WOOD.

Illustrated by HARRISON WEIR.

HAVING finished our visits to the oxen,
we come to a large group of hollow-
horned animals called the Antelopes.

The largest of them is the Eland (*Oreas
canna*), an animal which thrives well in the

Sometimes it becomes so fat and heavy
that the hunters, when they find it at a
distance from their camp, do not shoot it at
once, but drive it to the camp, and then
kill it, so as to save themselves the trouble
of carrying the meat. The flesh of the eland



Gardens, no less than twenty-eight having
been born there in twenty years. Take note,
by the way, that all the antelopes have very
wet noses, and most of them are tame, coming
to the bars of their enclosure and taking
biscuits, cakes, or grass from the hands of
the visitors. It will be as well, therefore,
before offering food to any of the antelopes,
to remove the gloves.

It inhabits South Africa, and, like some
other antelopes, can pass several months in
the hot and dry deserts without needing
water. Yet it grows to a very great size,
being about six feet high at the shoulders,
and is plump and fat, weighing as much as
two thousand pounds.

is very tender, and the skin is tough, and
makes very good leather for traces and reins.

It was therefore hoped that we might be
able to breed it like sheep or deer, so as
to obtain a new meat for the table. So we
might; but the eland, though it does not
need drink, eats so much food that the
breeder cannot make any money for himself.
Moreover, the eland is apt to be fierce, even
attacking its own keeper, so that we dare not
put it into our parks.

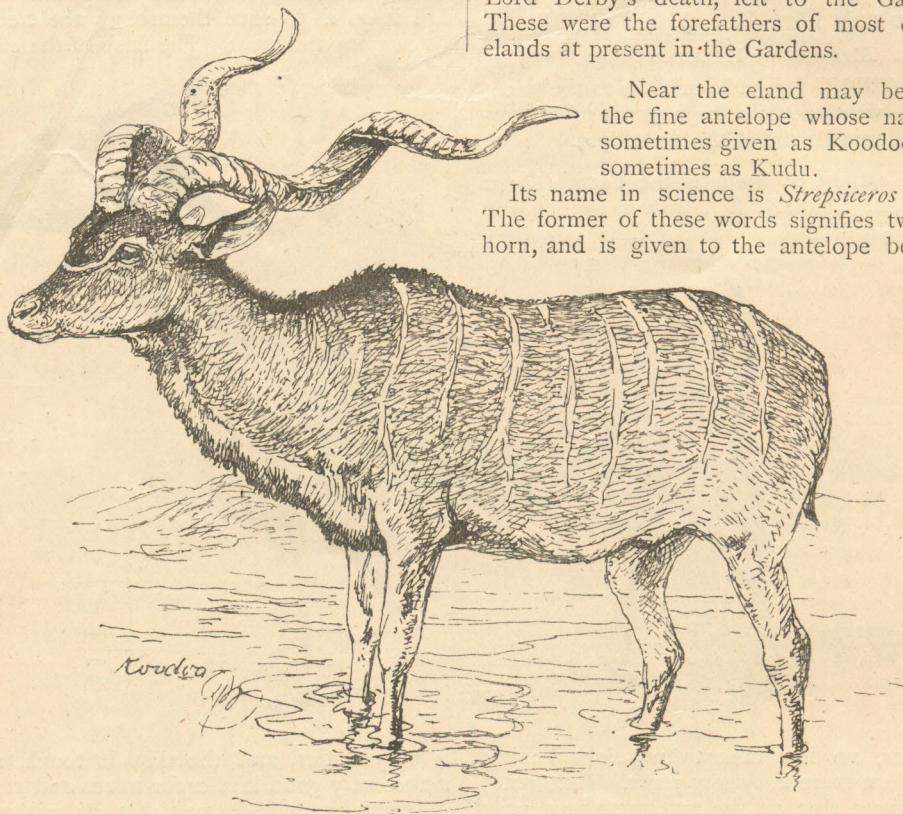
It is a sad pity, but there seems no help
for it. I think, however, that if a man like
the late Charles Waterton could put some
eland into his own park, and look after them
himself, he would make them as tame as our

cows. At all events, the male eland cannot be much fiercer than is often the case with our bulls. It has been said that if an eland

land were imported by the late Lord Derby in 1840. They all died, and ten years afterwards a few more were imported, and after Lord Derby's death, left to the Gardens. These were the forefathers of most of the elands at present in the Gardens.

Near the eland may be seen the fine antelope whose name is sometimes given as Koodoo, and sometimes as Kudu.

Its name in science is *Strepsiceros kudu*. The former of these words signifies twisted-horn, and is given to the antelope because



bull were put into a field, no one would dare to cross that field. But that is the case with our own cattle, and yet no one would like to keep our cows out of the fields which they love because the bulls are fierce, and likely to charge any one whom they do not know.

The horns of the eland are nearly straight, about two feet in length, and spiral. They point backwards when the animal is at rest.

According to the accounts of the Society, the first elands which were brought to Eng-

the horns of the male are so twisted that they look like two great corkscrews. It is not so large as the eland, being about four feet high at the shoulder. It is more active than the eland, and cannot be run down like that animal. It has been known to leap nearly ten feet in height without a run.

The flesh is very good, and the skin, which is thin but very tough, is used by the natives for making shoes, thongs, and the lashes which are put to the great whips which are used in driving oxen.

It might be thought that the huge horns of the male would be very much in its way when chased by the hunters among trees and bushes. But it throws its nose up, rests its horns upon its back, and so makes its way among the branches. The female does not possess the spiral horns. The koodoo is a native of South Africa, but is found farther north than the eland.

India has an antelope which is rather larger than the koodoo. This is the Nylghaie (*Boselaphus pictus*). The former of these names signifies "ox-deer," and the latter word "painted." The native name nylghaie signifies blue-ox, and is given to the animal

before they can shoot it. The men who drive it from the bush are in some danger, as the nylghaie is very fierce and active, and has a way of turning suddenly round when chased, dropping on its knees, and charging its enemy so quickly that it can hardly be escaped.



on account of the slaty blue colour of the male. The female has no horns, and her colour is reddish gray.

The Hindoos not only call it the blue-ox, but think that it really is a kind of ox, and therefore will not kill it, as they do the gazelle. As the nylghaie only lives in pairs, and not in herds, like many of the antelopes, and, besides, hides itself in the thickest bush, it is not easily killed.

The Mahomedan natives, whose religion does not make them afraid of killing oxen, are obliged to employ great numbers of men in driving the nylghaie out of the bush

Take notice of the different colours of the male and female, the upright mane, the tuft of long hair on the neck and throat, and the hump on the shoulders. In several animals, such as the bison, &c., the meat of the hump is the best part of the flesh; but in the nylghaie it is the only part worth eating, except the tongue, which seems to be good in all animals. The hide is used for making shields.

We now come to the Oryx of Northern Africa (*Oryx leucoryx*), an animal which has many native names. It is about three feet six inches high at the shoulders, and grayish

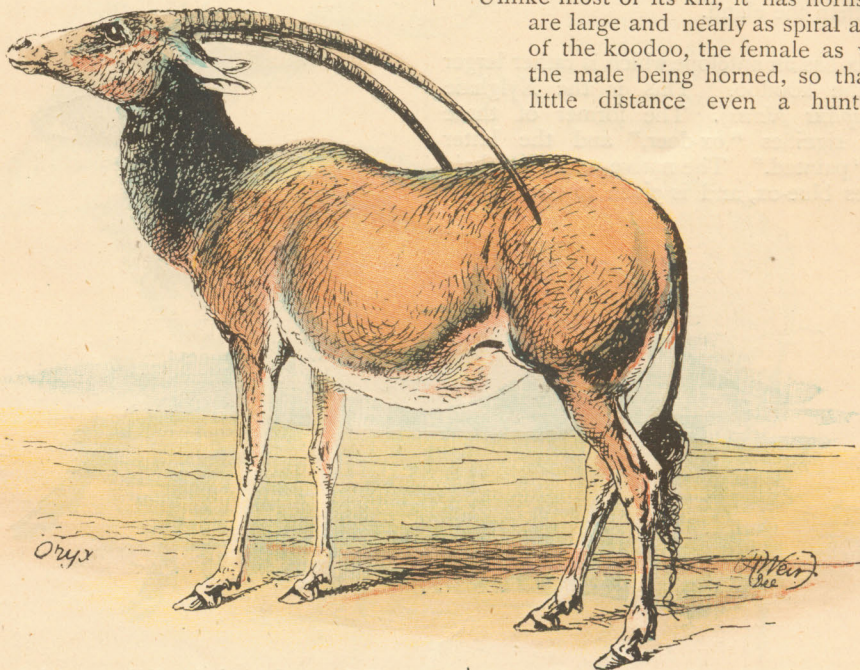
white with patches of black and reddish brown. There is a mane upon the neck.

The horns are nearly as long as the animal is high, and not only curve backwards, but are directed outwards, so that when the oryx throws its head backwards, the tips of the horns will rest on the sides. It is a bold

gallop, but in that case they put down their heads, raise their tufted tails in the air, snort, and dash off at full speed.

A near relative of the oryx is the Addax (*Addax nasomaculatus*), which also is found in North Africa, but lives in pairs and not in herds. It is of a heavier make than the oryx, and scarcely as active.

Unlike most of its kin, it has horns which are large and nearly as spiral as those of the koodoo, the female as well as the male being horned, so that at a little distance even a hunter can



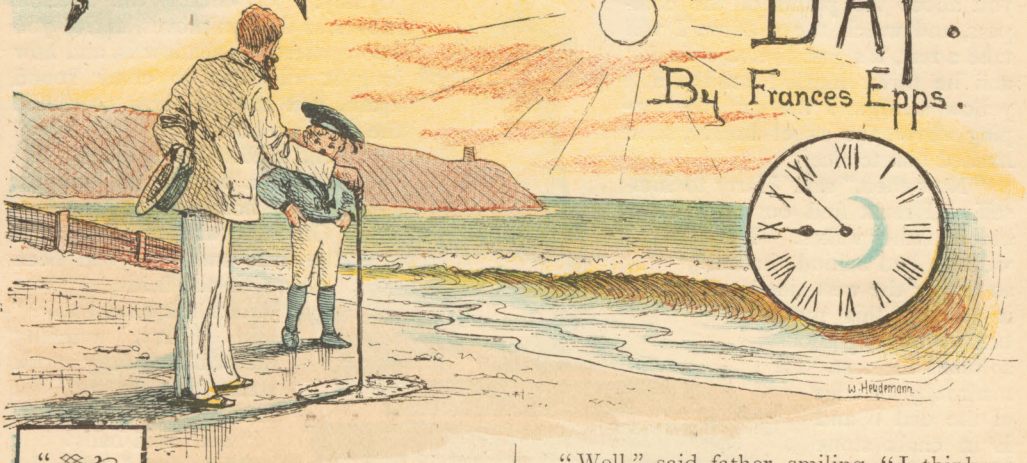
fighter, and even when lying wounded on the ground and not able to rise, it can swing its sharp horns so fiercely that no hunter will approach it until it is dead.

Then there is the Beisa antelope (*Oryx beisa*), which is also found in North Africa, and lives in great herds. The horns are straighter than those of the oryx. A herd of beisas is a very beautiful sight, and their gait, which is mostly either a walk or a trot, is said to be very much like that of the wild horse. Except when alarmed they seldom

scarcely know the one from the other. Look at its hoofs, which are large, wide, and spreading, in order to enable the animal to traverse the sandy plains on which it passes its life. It has no mane on the neck, but the throat and neck are clothed with long and coarse hair, something like that of the nylghaie. The colour is mostly whitish gray, but there is a black patch on the forehead, and a wash of pale reddish brown on the shoulders and part of the back.

THE TIME OF DAY.

By Frances Epps.



NO, thank you, father, I don't want a donkey, nor a goat-chaise; I only want a talk," said happy Harry, bounding along like an india-rubber ball. "Nurse always says 'Little boys shouldn't ask questions,' when I want to know all about everything; but now you have come, you will tell me all about the lights we saw last night, won't you? And I want to know about the colour of the sea (baby says it's the paint off the boats, but I think it's too clean-looking for that); but most of all, father," went on Harry, breathless from talking and bounding, "I want to know about a sun-dial we saw in a garden. What is it really for?" Harry looked up confidently at his father, as he slipped his hand into his, for was not he sure that father was quite kind, quite clever, and though generally, alas! quite busy too, were they not going to spend this whole long morning together on the breezy, shining sands?

"Well," said father, smiling, "I think we had better leave the lights and the colour of the sea till next time, and talk to-day about the sun-dial. Tell me what you saw."

"Not very much," said Harry, "because it was on a sort of stone mushroom with a thick stalk, much taller than I am, and nurse says I am getting very heavy to lift, so I only saw the top for a minute. There was a slanting little pole fixed in the middle of a flat round sort of clock face, with lines and figures on it, and nurse said it was to tell the time; but I couldn't see any hole to wind it up; and where could the works be? and I didn't see it move."

"Nurse is quite right," answered father, "that old sun-dial told the time before clocks and watches were as common as now, and it has no works to wind up, and never moves or gets out of order."

Harry's eager face looked puzzled.

"Let us make a rough sun-dial," said father, drawing a circle in the sand and

planting his stick in the middle. "Now what do you notice?"

"There's the shadow of the stick," said Harry, rather doubtfully.

"Yes; put a line of tiny white stones on the shadow. And now," continued father, "while you think over what I told you about the points of the compass, and watch the shadow, I will take a rest, it's just twelve o'clock," and he threw himself on the soft yellow sand, and the sun, the lapping waves, the sweet breeze, soon hushed him to sleep.

"Now then," said Harry to himself, "I must find out all I can before father wakes. The sun went to bed behind that mill, so that is the west side, and it got up this morning behind the lighthouse, so that's the east. I'll mark it by the edge of the dial W and E in chalk stone letters. Now," he continued, holding

out his arms, "E on right hand, W on left, that's N in front, and S behind. Why, the shadow of the stick lies on my N. Now, if I put 12 by the shadow and the N to show it's 12 o'clock, that's all I know."

The little man dropped down beside his father, and blinking at the sun through the brim of his straw hat, was quickly in dream-land too.

When they both woke, to Harry's delight the shadow had moved a little to the east.

"Oh! I see, father," he shouted joyfully, "of course the shadow moves as the sun moves, and if you know where the shadow is, and how long it will take to come round again, you can tell how to divide the dial into hours."

"Well," said father, smiling, "that will do for a beginning; now we must move homewards."

On their way they overtook the little ones, who had been playing in the fields.

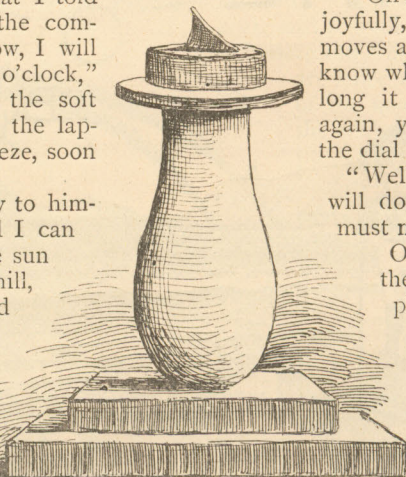
"What's the time, baby?" said Harry, touching the withered fairy clock stalks in the fat hot hand.

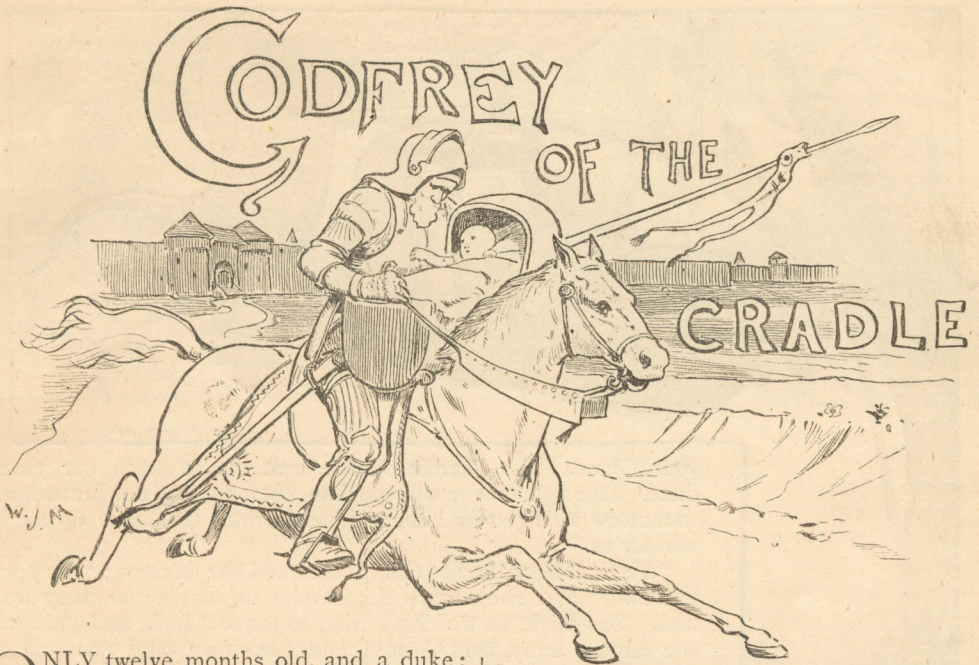
"Six," said baby.

"No, four," said the next to baby.

"Why, your fairy time is all different," laughed Harry.

"Well," said baby, with great firmness, "I quite sure it's *dinner-time*."





ONLY twelve months old, and a duke ;
Godfrey, Duke of Brabant !

Poor little fellow, he was not much to be envied all the same, for he had succeeded to his duchy in stormy times.

His grandfather was the first Godfrey, and his gallant father, who died worn out with fighting, was the second ; and here was poor little Godfrey the third, a baby not more than a year old, quite unable to defend his inheritance against his disloyal vassal, Arnold of Grimberghe.

Matters were becoming very serious indeed ; for Arnold was ravaging the whole country round Brussels, where the widowed Duchess Luitgarde was anxiously tending her little son.

The duke's four guardians resolved at length to try the chance of a battle ; and according to the custom of the time, they sent heralds to challenge the foe.

Arnold of Grimberghe sent back word that he would fight the next day.

This news soon reached Brussels, and

there was great running to and fro, and ringing of bells and clattering of weapons ; for all the men who could fight went off to join the army, and all the women went to the churches to pray for them.

When midnight came, an armed knight stopped before the gates of the castle, which were quickly opened for him.

In one of the state-rooms the little Duke of Brabant lay asleep in his cradle, his mother watching by his side.

Suddenly the door opened, and a tall knight in armour strode into the room.

The duchess sprang from her seat in terror ; but in a moment she recognized Sir Arnold of Crayenheim, one of her son's most gallant defenders.

"Why come ye so late, my Lord of Crayenheim?" she asked eagerly. "Is all well?"

"Ay, so far all is well," said the knight gruffly ; "but how it may fare with us on the morrow, I know not. But I crave pardon,



your Grace. His guardians have sent me to fetch our young duke. The sight of him will, mayhap, put a heart in our Brabanters; to-morrow we fight for him, and needs must that babe do all he can for us."

"Ye shall not take my child," shrieked the duchess; "they will kill him," and she strove desperately to snatch the baby from him. She might as well have tried to move a rock, and presently she fainted away, and Arnold laid her down, and marched off with the cradle, no one daring to stop him.

Then he mounted his horse, and placing his burden on the saddle before him, rode away. The little duke soon woke up, but he did not seem alarmed at the grim bearded face looking down at him, and stretched out his tiny fingers to touch the knight's flashing breastplate, which caught his eye.

"Go to sleep again, my Lion of Brabant," said Sir Arnold, speaking as softly as he knew how; "I'll warrant the Brabanters will fight to the death ere their liege lord shall lose his rights."

Godfrey slept quietly in his cradle until they reached the camp, when the youngest warrior that ever came to his vassals' assistance was reverently lifted down by his four noble guardians.

The next morning the fight began; and in front of the two armies, guarded by pike-men, waved the banner of Brabant, fixed to a willow-tree; while from the highest branch hung the cradle with the little duke. Everybody could see it, and there was not a man in the Brabant army but solemnly vowed to do or die that day for Godfrey-of-the-Cradle. The fight was a long and terrible one. The duke's four guardians were all killed, but after a fierce struggle the troops of Arnold of Grimberghe were driven back, and at length they fled. The battle was won, and Godfrey, third Duke of Brabant, henceforth known as Godfrey-of-the-Cradle, was taken down from his lofty post in the willow-tree.



A HOUSE TO LET.

By MRS. MOLESWORTH.

CHAPTER X.

DELIA'S BIG SISTER.



FEW days went on and nothing was heard by Poppy and her mother about the house being taken. They were almost beginning to hope that it had been a false alarm, for "there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip," said the caretaker, who was rather fond of proverbs, when one morning just as Poppy was coming in from school, there appeared a man sent by the agent to take down the board announcing that the "desirable residence was to be sold or let."

"And you'll clean off the paper in the front window too, please," said the young man, civilly enough, as he was leaving.

"Then it's quite true—the house is really taken?" she said.

"Certainly it is," he replied, "and a good job too for the owners."

"To be sure," she said trying to smile, "'what's one man's meat is another man's poison,'" which the young man thought rather a good joke.

"You don't know as your gentleman is in want of a caretaker for any other house, do you?" she said timidly.

"Can't say, I'm sure. But there's houses dropping in every day. 'Twould do no harm for you to step round and ask for yourself. And oh, by the by, I was forgetting I was to tell you you needn't turn out till you hear more. The party that's taken the house might want you to stay on a bit when their things begin to come in—"

"When are they coming?"

"They want to be in and settled by the middle of May," he said. "You'll come in for the cleaning-down, maybe. You see there's not much painting or papering needed; it's in such good condition."

And with these words he took his departure.

Considering what he had told her, Poppy's mother thought it best not to "step round" to the agent's.

"They might think me a worrit," she said to her little daughter, "seein' as how they've already spoke for me to the gentlefolk as has bought the house. We must just wait a bit, Poppy, and see."

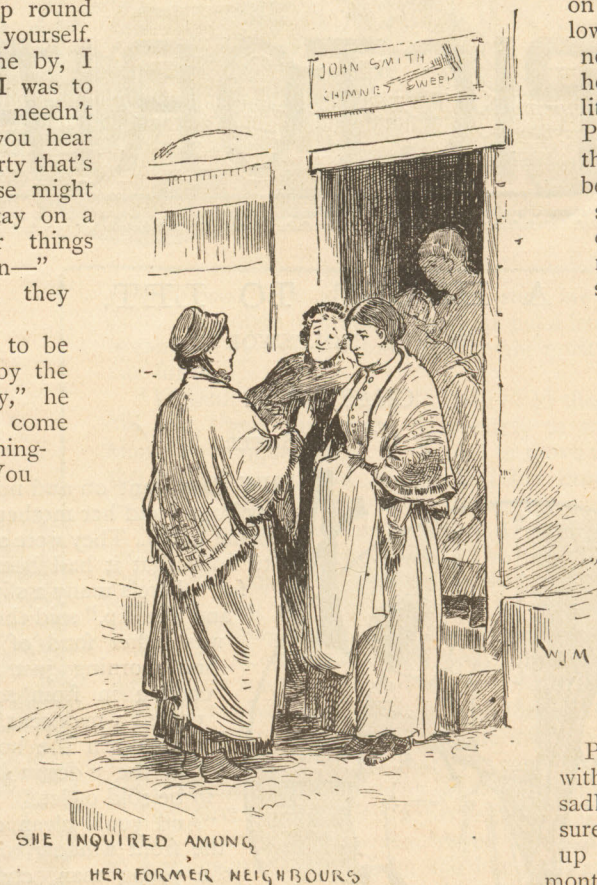
All the same without saying anything to her little daughter she inquired among some of her former neighbours about a room in some decent locality in case nothing else in the way of caretaking turned up. She had been out on this errand the following Wednesday afternoon, Poppy's half-holiday, leaving the little girl in charge—Poppy only thought that her mother had been out shopping—so as the caretaker came near to number nine on her return she was surprised to see the child looking out for her with evident eagerness.

"Nothing wrong, deary?" she said cheerfully, though with a little sinking at her heart. Her small "house hunting" on her own account had not tended to raise her spirits; she minded nothing for herself, but for

Poppy! The few rooms within her means seemed sadly poor and stuffy; surely the rents had gone up even in the last few months? "nothing wrong?" she repeated, supposing the new owners of the

house were coming in at once, and did not want her at all!

"No, no, mother, at least I don't think so. The ladies, at least one of them has been here; it was quite a young lady; she came



to take a measure for her Mamma she said, and oh! just fancy, mother, she was Miss Delia's—Miss Delia-in-the-country's big sister! She's stayin' over the way, and she knowed me—she said, 'Well, my little girl, and how have you been getting on?'"

Poppy's mother was very much interested.

"I wish I could see some of the ladies," she said. "They'd maybe speak a word for me for the cleaning."

"If Miss Delia had been there I could have said somethin' about it," Poppy added. "If only I wasn't at school all day, mother, I'd have ever so much more chance of seein' Master Jack and Miss Bessie. I'm sure they'll be sorry when we go away from this house; they're real kind, and so's their Mamma."

"But if so be as it's their cousins as is comin', they'll be pleased at that too," said her mother. "Goods and bads is queerly mixed up in this world. Any way I'm right down glad you had your day in the country with an easy mind, my deary."

Over the way in Jack's and Bessie's home the same subject, little as Poppy and her mother suspected it, was being talked about.

"I saw the little girl—I forget her name—the caretaker's little girl at number nine, auntie, when I went over there to measure the drawing-room mantelpiece for mother," said Constance, Delia's "big sister," as Poppy had described her.

Her aunt started.

"Oh, by the by, I meant to have gone over to speak to the poor woman. I did send a message by Carter to tell her not to be uneasy. But it was difficult for me to know what to say till your mother had seen her for herself."

"But Mamma did see her for herself, the other day you know, when she came to look over the house," said Constance. "Didn't she tell her then what we've been thinking of?"

"No, several things had to be considered first and some inquiries made. It was only yesterday I heard that your father and mother had decided to offer her the



I SAW THE LITTLE GIRL—
I FORGET HER NAME

lodge. I quite meant to have gone over to speak to her, but I have been so exceedingly busy. However she is a sensible woman, and she must have had my message. I'll go over this afternoon."

"Yes, do," said Constance. "Somehow I don't feel sure—the poor little girl did look rather melancholy now I come to think of it."

But the afternoon was already well advanced, and before the children's mother could start some callers came, who stayed so long that by the time they left it was decidedly too late. Her visit had to be put off till the next morning.

And all this time Poppy's heart was very sore. She did not like to say much to her mother who was sad enough already. She was not sorry that evening to catch sight of a small dark object in one corner of the kitchen, which crept towards her when she called it gently.

"Flip, Flip," she said, "come and speak to me. Mother's in the back kitchen washing. Oh, Flip, have you heard that we're going away—that the house is taken?"

"I thought some-

thing was the matter," Flip replied. "I—I could not help hearing some conversation between you and your mother. It is very distressing, just too when we had given up all idea of emigrating, for your sake, dear Poppy. I fear I could not persuade my parents to change their minds again about going to the country."

"But *we're* not going there—I wish we were! only you didn't give up for our sakes only, Flip—you know what I told you about the c—"

Flip shivered.

"Hush!" he said. "Yes, that is true certainly. But it is a sad look-out. Who knows what sort of people the newcomers may be, or *who*," and here his voice dropped, "*who* may come with them?"

"Poor Flip!" said Poppy, "yes, it's very sad for all of you too. But I'll tell you what—I know the ladies who are coming—I'll see if I can't get them to promise not to have a—you know what. You be sure to come and have another talk with me before we go, and I'll tell you if I've been able to ask them."

"Oh, thank you, dear Poppy, thank you," said Flip. "I'll—" but at that moment the charwoman came in, and off he scudded tail and all!

(To be continued.)



"Flip, Flip. COME AND SPEAK
TO ME,
W.J.M.

THE ZOO.

ANTELOPES: GAZELLE, SPRING-BOK.

BY THE LATE REV. J. G. WOOD.

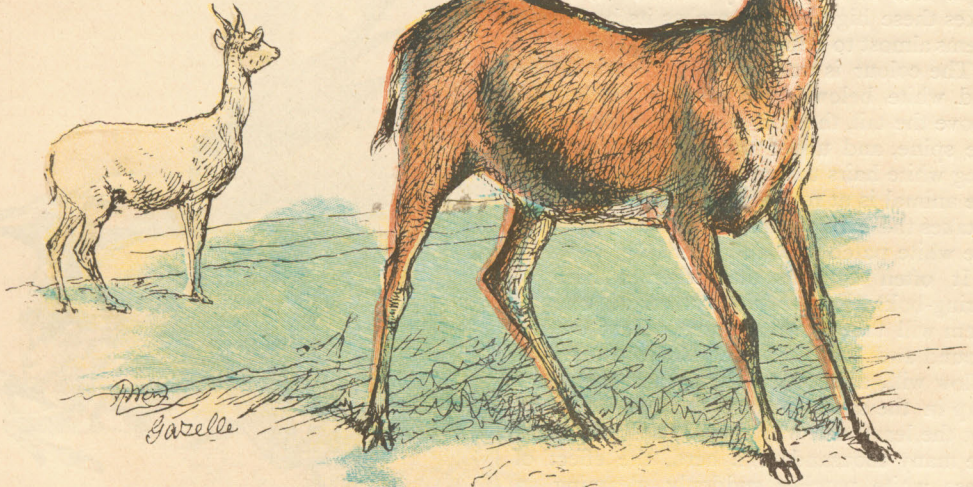
Illustrated by HARRISON WEIR.

NOW we come to the Gazelles, of which there are many species, eleven or twelve being in the Gardens. Most of them are much alike in form and habits, so that I shall only take for description the two that differ the most from each other.

The first is the common Gazelle (*Gazella dorcas*) of North Africa. Notice that the word *dorcas* is Greek, and in former days

other beasts of prey are always looking out for the chance of catching a gazelle that will allow them to approach.

So swift are they that no hunter will try to



was often used as a woman's name. The Hebrew name of the same animal is Tabitha. (See Acts ix. 36.)

The gazelles are quite small animals, being not quite two feet high at the shoulder. They are very swift, very wary, and live together in large herds.

As is the case with many animals which herd together, some of their number are posted outside the herd for the purpose of watching against enemies. This is quite needful, for the lions, leopards, wolves, and

run them down in fair chase, and the beasts of prey know that if once the gazelles take alarm, they cannot be caught. So they employ all kinds of devices to approach the herd without being seen, and hence comes the need for posting sentinels who do nothing but watch, and will not even eat until another takes the post.

The native hunters, when they chase the gazelle, mostly employ a sort of hawk which is trained to the sport. The light limbs of the gazelle would soon take it out of reach

of the hounds, and so, as soon as a herd is seen, the hunter lets loose a falcon as well as his dogs. The falcon can fly much faster than the gazelle can run, pounces on one of them, settles on its head, and flaps her wings over its eyes, so that it does not know how to escape, and allows the dogs to come up and seize it. As the reader may remember, the chetah is used for the same purpose.

The second gazelle is the beautiful Springbok of South Africa (*Gazella euchores*).

This animal well deserves its name, for it has a most wonderful power of leaping, having been known to spring to a height of twelve feet, and taking leaps of seven or eight feet in its ordinary course. When it takes these high leaps it arches its back, and seems almost to hang in the air.

The colour is warm reddish brown above and white below. But on the back, just above the tail, the skin is doubly folded along the spine, and under the fold is a patch of long white hairs that are almost hidden when the animal is at rest or walking. But when it takes these lofty leaps, and arches its back, the white patch is plainly seen.

It often happens that when a herd of springboks is marching onwards, one of them will take alarm at some object on the ground and jump over it. All those which follow will, as soon as they reach the spot, leap in the same manner, though they have not the least idea why they do so. As there are many thousands in a herd, the effect of these white patches suddenly gleaming in the sunbeams is quite startling, and is as if a flock of white birds were darting among the springboks.

How many springboks there are in these herds no one can tell. Mr. Gordon Cumming mentions that one morning, about two hours before dawn, he had been lying awake in his waggon, listening to the grunting sounds which the male springboks utter, but only thought that one of the usual herds was grazing near his camp.

But when he looked out at daybreak, he saw that a vast herd was steadily marching

onwards. They came through an opening in the hills towards the west, and marched to a ridge in the east, about a mile distant, over which they passed and were lost to sight. The column was about half a mile wide, and for more than two hours they marched along "like the flood of a great river."



To the native tribes the "bok-trekken," as these marching herds are called, are of the greatest value, as the flesh affords them food, and the skins can be made into the simple robes which form the only dress or furniture of these people.

Want of food is the reason which causes

the spring-bok to "trek," and so the natives lay a sort of trap for them. On the great plains of that part of South Africa there is plenty of coarse herbage, which in the summer becomes dry and can easily be burned. The natives set fire to it, and when the rains fall the ashes sink into the ground, and cause a tender grass to spring up where the fire has passed. By some instinct which we cannot explain, the spring-boks are sure to find out

their fill they move aside, lie down in order to chew the cud, and allow the rest of the herd to pass by them. They then take their places at the rear of the herd, and are not able to procure any more food until they have again worked their way to the front.

A moving herd of this kind is always



the grass, and when they reach it are in the midst of the black hunters who are lying in wait for them.

These marches are very trying to the spring-boks, and none but the strongest can live through them. When they reach the grass, only those animals which are in front can get at it, as they are pushed on by the crowd behind them. They therefore eat as fast as they can, and when they have eaten

attended by various beasts of prey, which do not venture to attack the main body, but watch for those which have left the ranks and are not strong enough to regain a place in them.

So enormous are these herds, and so tightly are the animals wedged together, that a flock of sheep has been caught in one of them and carried off among them, while on one occasion a lion which had tried to drag a

spring-bok out of the herd could not force his way out again, and was obliged to march with them. Had he fallen or even tried to stop he would have been trampled to death under the countless hoofs.

Like other gazelles the spring-bok is easily tamed, and becomes a pretty and amusing pet. In his *Great Thirst Land* Captain Gillmore Parker, who is well known under

that it was as worthy a member of the community as any one in it; and I dare say it was. In the morning it was in the habit of crossing the Vaal river and going out on the velt to feed, where it would associate with the wild ones, but never failed to return at night. It ate almost anything of a vegetable nature, from bread to fruit, and was particularly fond of sugar. Strange dogs



the title of "Ubique," the motto of the Royal Artillery, writes as follows: "I do not know an animal that makes a more graceful and attractive pet than a spring-bok; they appear capable of great attachment, and are well able to discriminate who are their friends.

"Mrs. Leask of Klerksdorp had one; it played with the children, bullied the dogs, and walked about the village as if conscious

would occasionally chase it, but its speed was so great that it soon distanced them."

The head of the spring-bok is grayish white, but there is a patch of reddish brown at the base of the horns, and a stripe of the same colour runs along the front of the head as far as the nose, and another stripe from the eyes to the corners of the mouth. The horns are small, those of a specimen now before me being just seven inches in length.



REUBEN, THE REFUGEE.

By CHRISTIAN BURKE.

WE call him the Refugee because he took refuge with us, and he's my very own dog. All my own ; first, because I found him, and "finding is keeping," you know. And then he came on my birthday, and then Father says so. Whenever we get bothered about a thing, and Jack thinks *he* ought to have it because he's the eldest, and I think I ought to have it because I'm youngest, and Edie says the middle one always gets left out, then we go and ask Father or Mother, and they always settle just right. But I was going to tell you how I found Reuben. It was on my last birthday, and I was nine years old. Of course I woke up very early that morning—and because it was my birthday nurse let me get up, though she said it was nearly an hour too soon, and I should have all the longer to wait for breakfast and my presents. When I was dressed I did not quite know where to go, for nurse said she was busy and didn't want me "fussing" about

the nursery. I couldn't go into the dining-room either, for Maggie and Cecil, my big sisters, were arranging my presents, so I went into the hall and looked at the clock, and it only said half-past seven, and I knew I had a whole hour to wait.

Let me see, then what did I do? I ran down and took a look at my garden, and then I thought I'd go to the library window, and see if Father was down. He's very clever you know, and writes books, and sometimes he gets up very early to work, and I knew if he was there he would let me in, because it was my birthday.

The library window was open, it is a French window and opens down to the ground, so I thought Father must be there. When I got near I heard such a funny sound, just as if some one was crying and groaning. I went up to the window-sill ; Father wasn't there and I couldn't see any one, but still I heard this dreadful sound. It made me feel quite fright-

ened, and at first I thought I'd run away and call the gardener, but I remembered I was nine years old, quite big, it would not do to be frightened now. Perhaps it was the cat talking to herself. Cats do make most *dreadful* noises talking on the roofs at night! Any way I thought I ought to go and see. The library door was just opposite the window, so that I could soon fly out, and if it was a burglar who had broken his leg why, what a fine thing it would be if I could catch him and prevent his hobbling away on his other leg!

I crept in very softly, not to startle any one, but still I could see nothing. I began to think it must be a *very* little burglar, or else that he had got up the chimney. At last I looked under the library table and there I found—what do you think I found? Why, a poor gray and white dog—something like a sheep dog—with the sweetest face and kindest eyes you ever saw. He was all draggled with mud, and one of his fore-paws was cramped up under him, and his other paws were cut and bleeding as if he had run a very long way. He looked so patient and full of pain that I nearly began to cry. I crept up to him and patted his head, and called him a good dog, and then he tried to look up and lick my hand, but he had not strength enough, and began moaning again. I scrambled out from under the table and rushed into the hall, and luckily I just met Father on the stairs, so I cried out, "Oh, Father, there's the dearest dog in the



"The Gardener set his leg."

library and I think he's dying! Oh, please do come and cure him and give him to me."

Father laughed and wouldn't believe me at first, but I dragged him in to see, and then Mother came too. Father felt his leg and said it was broken, and then he lifted him up all wet and muddy as he was and carried him into the kitchen, so gently, and Mother found a soft mat and put it before the fire. We laid the dog there and Jack rushed off for the gardener, and he came and set the leg, and the dog kept trying to lick our hands and wag his tail to thank us. Father said he must have come from a long way off, and taken shelter in the garden, and then seeing the open window crept in there to die. I told him how I found him, and how I was rather frightened, but that I thought I ought



"we love each other dearly"

to go and see ; and Father said "That's my brave girl !" and I felt *so* proud.

Jack said, "Don't you think he ought to belong to Hilda, because it's her birthday and she discovered him ?"

It was *very* kind of Jack. Father looked pleased, and then he said, "Yes, I think Hilda must have him for her own."

I was so glad. I had a heap of presents—a lovely new doll and half a sovereign to spend

as I liked, and a lot of books and things, but I liked my dog best of all. He soon got quite well and turned out to be such a good house-dog, and he's very handsome too, and so gentle and loving. I called him Reuben, and we love each other dearly.

We never knew where he came from. I sometimes wonder whether Santa Claus ever gives people presents in the summer. If so, I think perhaps he sent me Reuben.

"BE A BRAVE BOY."

BY F. SCARLETT POTTER.



"**B**E a brave boy," said Guy's mother. "Seven years old and a coward, I should be ashamed!" Guy did not like to be called a coward—who would? He said he would do as his mother wished. This was only to carry a note to his uncle's house. It was but a little way to go—just down the lane and across a field or two; but Guy had never before been so far by himself, and he was afraid to go alone. Now, however, he went, walking very slowly along the lane, and peeping anxiously round every turn of the road. What he feared might be coming to hurt him, I should find it hard to say, and I do not suppose that Guy himself could have told you; but he was such a little coward that if even the most innocent dog that ever wagged a tail had come his way he would at once have taken to his heels.

There was a little gate where the path turned into the fields, and beyond it a plank over a wide and muddy ditch. Guy crossed in safety: he felt braver now that he was out of the dark lane, and marched more briskly towards the next gate. But before he reached it something came through it and towards him that was quite too much for his courage. It was a something not less dreadful than an old woman! She was, it must be owned, an ugly old woman, and her dress, which was old and patched, was very different from that worn by Guy's mother or aunt; yet I scarcely see why being old and wrinkled and poor should have made her so terrible to Guy. But so it was. In great alarm he turned and ran back as fast as his short legs would carry him. He did not even



dare stay to look behind him till he reached the plank over the ditch. Then he unluckily did so.

I say "unluckily", for, as he looked back just as he was in the act of crossing the plank, and as no one can look two ways at the same time, he did not of course pay proper attention to his own steps. The result was that he missed his footing, and down he went into the ditch below.

It was not a deep ditch, and Guy as he fell caught the plank with both his hands ; so he did not go headlong into the mud. Still he was in it far over shoes and socks, and he began to cry lustily.

The old woman, who had been the innocent cause of his mishap, heard him and hobbled towards him as fast as she was able. Poor Guy was stuck fast in the mud and could not run away, so he was obliged to let her help him out, whether he liked it or not. Yet now that he saw her more closely he found that she was not so very terrible after all. She spoke kindly, and looked kindly. He was no longer afraid of her ; but he had trouble enough, poor boy ! for when he looked at

his feet and legs and saw them covered with black mud, and thought how ashamed he should be to go to his uncle's in such a plight, he began to sob anew.

But the worthy old woman told him not to cry, for that she would take him to her cottage, which was near at hand, and clean his shoes and dry his socks. Glad you may be sure he was to go with her, and to sit by her fire whilst she made him once more fit to be seen, and very grateful he felt to her afterwards. By and by he was able to go on to his uncle's, not looking much the worse for his mishap.

Had not Guy been a little coward he would have escaped falling into the ditch. It often happens that those who are always trying to run away from what they think to be danger, get into more troubles than other people.

THE PAPER KITE





1. Charley goes out to fly his large new kite in spite of his having been forbidden to do so. 2. He meets his friend Dick and laughs at the smallness of Dick's kite. 3. But Dick finds no difficulty in flying his kite while Charley cannot get his to rise at all. 4. At last a great gust of wind comes and away goes the kite and Charlie with it. 5. He won't let go, and to his great dismay is rapidly carried in the direction of the river. 6. The cord suddenly breaks and he falls into the water. 7. Luckily some fishermen near at hand fish him out with a boat-hook. 8. The kite takes refuge on the spire of the church. 9. Charlie comes home torn and draggled. 10. He is punished and sent off to bed, and this is what he dreams all night long.



HIDE AND SEEK

Hush! Hush!

Call again =

Where are you?

There! There!

I heard Baby whisper

High up on the stair

Come down

We have found you

That Mary and

me

We have hunted & hunted

And now we are "he".

2

Now hide your eyes Baby

And mind what I say

Don't look and don't

listen

While we run away

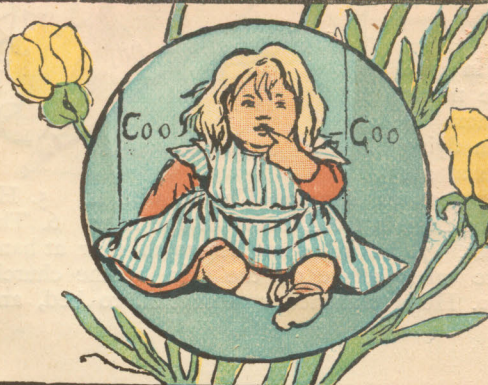
We'll hide in the

cupboard

Quick quick in you go.

Are you ready? They're coming.

Call louder! Coo-coo!—





A HOUSE TO LET.

By Mrs. MOLESWORTH.

CHAPTER XI.

ALMOST TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE.



“GOOD morning, Mrs. Orchard,” (I don’t think I have ever mentioned that Poppy’s last name was Orchard, have I? A nice country-sounding name it is, isn’t it?) “I am so sorry not to have come over to see you before, but you got my nurse’s message?” said Bessie’s mother to Poppy’s, the next day when she found herself at last standing at the door of number nine opposite.

The caretaker stared.

“No, ma’am, I don’t think I’ve had any message,” she said. “And if it was given to Poppy, she’s a thinkin’ kind of child; she wouldn’t go to forget to tell me. She’s just in from school, ma’am, I’ll call her. But would you kindly step down to the kitchen, there’s not a chair nor a stool anywhere else, though it won’t be long like that. You’ve heard, ma’am, as the house is taken?”

She was rather excited at the lady’s visit and it made her talk more than usual, as she led the way to the kitchen, Bessy’s mother following her.

“Yes,” she replied, “it is about that I wanted to speak to you, and it will take some little time to explain so we may as well sit down and talk comfortably. Oh, here is Poppy. How are you, my dear? Didn’t my second nurse, give you a message from me for your mother the other day, Poppy?” Poppy considered.

"No, ma'am," she replied, "she only asked me if mother would be in on Monday, and I said I knew she would be. Perhaps I should have told mother, but I never thought of it again."

"You should 'a told me," said the caretaker.

"Oh, but that wasn't the message," said the lady. "There must have been some mistake about it. My message was to tell you, Mrs. Orchard, that the ladies who were coming to see the house were relations of ours and that you musn't be put out about having to leave, as we should think of you in making our plans. I must speak to Carter about it."

The poor woman's face cleared

"And I'm sure, ma'am, it was very kind of you to think of us. If maybe I might make so bold, I'd be proud to do the cleaning and see to the furniture a bit when it comes in. It'd give me nice time to look about for a new place for us."

"Certainly," her visitor replied, "I've no doubt my sister would be glad to keep you on here a little. But I have much more to speak of than that. How would you and Poppy like to go to the country to live, Mrs. Orchard? The smaller of the two lodges at my sister's, the place Poppy was at with my children on their birthday, is empty, and they want some one for it. There is not so much gate opening as at the principal lodge, and it is close to the farm and not lonely: it is a pretty little house and you would have it rent-free and a few shillings a week, and you might take in some washing."

She was half surprised when she stopped speaking that there was no reply. But

glancing up, she quickly saw the reason, the tears were streaming down the poor woman's face; she *could* not speak, while little Poppy's cheeks were crimson with excitement and her eyes dancing in her head.

"Oh! mother, mother," she cried, "don't take on so. Do tell the lady as it'll be like heaven to us to go and live in the country, oh, mother, do!"

Mrs. Orchard choked down her tears.

"Oh, ma'am," she said. "Indeed what she says is true. I don't know where to find words for to thank you, for it's all come of your goodness to us. I do trust as I'll



"Six pairs of long little ears."

show I'm grateful by doing all in my power to serve your friends faithful."

"I'm sure you will," said Jack's and Bessie's mother kindly; there were tears in her own eyes, I fancy, "and I am so glad you like the idea. My sister will be here herself next week and she will come in and see you and talk it all over. Her eldest daughter is here now."

"Yes'm," said Poppy. "I saw it was Miss Delia's big sister, and mother and me we hoped as maybe t'was your ladies that were takin' the house; because of the cleanin' you see, but we never thought of anything like *this*!" and the child quite

gasped with her delight. "There's only one thing, ma'am, no—there's two things," she went on confidently. Poppy was not a shy child. "I'll be so sorry not to see Master Jack and Miss Bessie," and her pretty blue eyes grew tearful.

"But you will see them, my dear," said the lady. "They very often go out to their aunt's and sometimes they stay there several weeks. It is only for a short time of the year that my relations are to be in London you know."

Poppy grew quite bright again.

corner of the kitchen, for Poppy was very quick of hearing. She was right; six pairs of long little ears were eagerly listening for the lady's reply.

"A cat," she repeated, looking puzzled—oh dear what a shudder went through the group of Brighteyes standing at the door of their hole! "Why shouldn't they keep a cat, my dear?"

"Oh, ma'am, Poppy's quite silly-like about the mice," said her mother apologetically. "There's some here that's so tame, she's come quite to make pets of 'em. They do no



A SHUDDER WENT THROUGH THE
GROUP OF BRIGHTYES.

"That will be nice," she said, "and to be sure it isn't as if mother and me had been going to stay here, in this house we might have been several streets off."

"And what is the other thing?" asked the children's mother. "You said there were two?"

Poppy grew very red.

"It's—it's only—p'raps I might ask the ladies when they come themselves," she said at last. "It's only—I do *hope* they won't keep a cat."

She fancied she heard a slight rustle in a

harm, I'll say that for them, and there don't seem many."

"Only Flip—and the father and mother," said Poppy glibly.

The lady could not help smiling.

"Are these your names for them?" she said. "Well, now I come to think of it, I dare say my friends will not keep a cat, for the girls have some very favourite birds. But you'd better ask them yourself, Poppy, when you see them next week, and perhaps you might say a word or two to your pet mice? If they promise to be very good and

not mischievous and if no other mice come to live at number nine perhaps my sister will allow this family to stay here unmolested. There are mice and mice, you know; some are exceedingly tiresome and mischievous."

"Ours aren't likethat, I'm sure," answered Poppy. "All the same I'll tell Flip," and seeing the amused glances between the lady and her mother she blushed a little. "I'll tell Flip what you say, ma'am. And when Miss Delia's Mamma comes I'll ask her. I am so glad they don't like cats."

Soon after this, Jack's and Bessie's mother went away, Mrs. Orchard and Poppy following her with their smiling faces to the door.

"It is a real pleasure to see them looking so happy," thought the kind lady to herself.

And oh what a joyful afternoon the two had; talking over the news that seemed almost too good to be true, picturing the



I'll tell Flip what you say, ma'am

W.J.M.

little cottage to themselves, planning what new things they would be able to buy to make it look pretty and neat. "For we must be a credit to the ladies, you see, Poppy," said her mother.

(To be continued.)

CARLO, JEMMY, AND JACK.

BY THE LATE ELIZABETH HUNTER.

CARLO was a fine Newfoundland dog, three years old, brave and full of fun. Jemmy was a boy, just seven, not full of fun, very timid and inclined to be fretful. His parents were poor, with more children than they could well provide for; so Jemmy, like his brothers and sisters, was scantily clothed and scantily fed, and in winter had such a hard time of it that he seldom had spirit to play, even at snow-balling.

Carlo lived at a butcher's, and had plenty to eat, and as his coat was warm he had not the same troubles that little Jemmy had. Altogether, Carlo was better off as

a dog than Jemmy as a

boy. He was almost as tall as

Jemmy; indeed when he stood on his

hind legs and put his paws on Jemmy's shoulders, as he once did, he was taller. After that, Jemmy was frightened at Carlo, and whenever he saw him in his street would run home crying. That was pretty often, for the butcher lived round the corner, so Carlo was as often in Jemmy's street as in his own.

One day Jemmy's mother sent him to the chandler's shop for a quartern loaf, a half-pound of butter and other things too, and as he had no basket to put them all in the shopkeeper packed them, as well as he could, in the little boy's arms.

Thus laden, Jemmy had not gone far down the street when he saw Carlo trotting briskly towards him. He tried to shrink past him by keeping close to the houses, but Carlo, who did not know that Jemmy was afraid, stopped right in front of him and said, in dog language, "How d'ye do?"

Jemmy feared the dog was going to put his paws on his shoulders again, and cried out for help, trying, at the same time, to push Carlo aside with the edge of the plate, on which was the butter. But Carlo quite misunderstood Jemmy's intention; he thought Jemmy offered him the butter to eat, so, putting his head on one side, he licked it up at one mouthful, leaving an empty plate in Jemmy's hand. Jemmy screamed, and a man who was passing drove the dog away. Jemmy ran home crying, where there was a general lamentation for the loss of the butter. Now Jemmy was more afraid of Carlo than ever.



AFTER THIS JEMMY WAS FRIGHTENED
AT CARLO

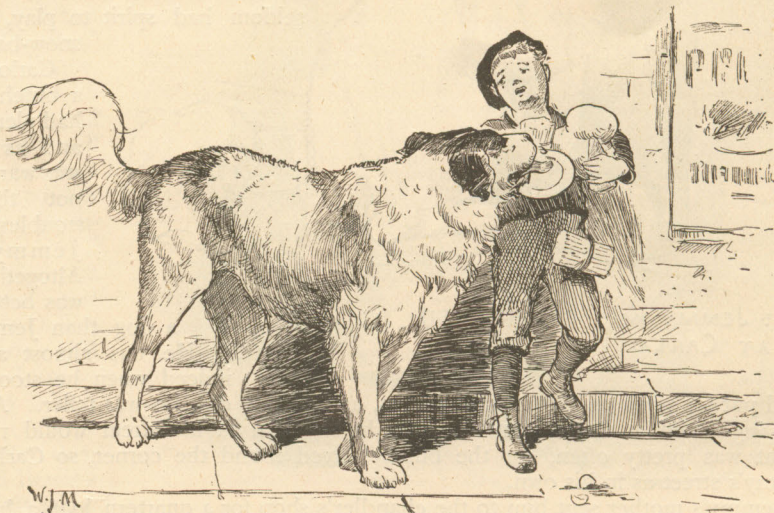
Summer time came and the streets instead of being muddy were dusty: the sun baked the bricks of the houses and the pavement of the street: altogether it was too hot to play, even on the shady side of the way. Carlo found his coat too hot and lay panting in the shade of his master's shop all day, but when evening came he sallied out and played with the dogs or the boys that chanced to be in the street. Of course he preferred dogs to boys, but he was always ready to play with either.

she had lived near the sea, and she found London a very different place.

People who live in kitchens seldom have visitors, but one day, in this very hot summer, there came one to Jimmy's mother. This was a great joy to the poor woman, for the visitor was no other than her brother Jem, who was a fisherman and lived by the sea, where her home had once been.

He was a big strong man, as healthy as the sea breezes he lived among.

"Well, and how are yer all?" asked he,



Jemmy kept indoors. The streets were the only place that he, and such as he, had to play in: they were too hot in the day-time, and in the evening he was afraid of Carlo. Indeed he had as little spirit to play in the summer as in the winter, for each season brought its troubles to poor Jemmy.

His parents, with their five children, had only two rooms to live in, and those were underground kitchens, cold and damp in the winter, hot and stuffy in the summer. Jemmy's mother complained more of the stuffiness than of the cold, for in her youth

taking a seat, after the first greetings were over. "How's the master and how's the chicks?"

"Only so—so," said the mother; "London isn't like the country; there's nothing to breathe here."

"Not much, certainly," said the fisherman, looking round to see where the air came from, "and what you get tastes stale."

"So it do," replied the mother, "so it do, and, as I say, 'tisn't healthy. Here's your little namesake; he's a poor weakly thing, no strength in him."



"Why he does look as if he hadn't always enough to eat," said the uncle, taking the child between his knees.

"I do the best I can for 'em," said the mother sadly; "but Bill's wages is so small I can't often get meat for the children."

"I'll tell you what, Nancy," said the fisherman, "you must let this little fellow go back

with me: a few weeks by the sea-side will do him a world o' good."

"Oh! that is so kind o' you, Jem," said the mother with tears in her eyes; "you always was a good brother to me, God bless you."

So Jemmy went with his uncle the fisherman to his home by the sea.

At first he was frightened at the big waves that dashed in on the shore, and when next day his uncle put him, with his cousin Jack, a healthy, brave boy, a year older than Jemmy, into a boat, he began to cry, but his uncle said sternly, "You mustn't be a coward,

boy; we can't have cowards here." Jack laughed and Jemmy stopped crying.

Luckily for Jemmy, the sea was smooth that day, and as his uncle rowed, the motion of the boat seemed to Jemmy like that of a swing, which he liked much. Gradually he forgot his fear, and when his uncle rowed back to land he was sorry to leave the boat.

Jack and he became great friends. Jack showed him how to dig holes in the sand, and how to float tiny boats and bits of chips in the pools of sea-water on the shore.

"Wouldn't you like to be a sailor, Jemmy?" said Jack one day, as the two boys stood watching a large ship sailing by in the distance; "I'm going to be one."

"Don't they get drowned sometimes?" asked Jemmy.

"Why of course they do," said Jack laughing; "and don't people get killed on shore sometimes? My father says we're not to think whether we shall be drowned or not when we go to sea; only cowards do that. Work well and speak the truth, he says. So I shall be a sailor."

Jemmy was ashamed of being a coward, and thought he would like to be whatever Jack was.



By the end of three weeks Jimmy's pale face had become brown and had a healthy glow in it. The sea air had "done him a world o' good." But his improvement was not all owing to the sea air. He had wholesome food and enough of it; for the fisherman, though not earning more money than his brother-in-law, spent it more wisely and lived a healthier life. Jimmy thrived on the large basin of porridge his aunt gave him for breakfast, better than on the sloppy tea and scanty bread and butter he had at home.

"Suppose we keep the little chap all the summer?" said the fisherman to his wife. "Nancy's got a rare handful with the others, and she's none the best manager, poor soul."

"With all my heart," said the wife; "he'll learn a deal from Jack, and they've got so fond o' one another."

So Jimmy stayed on and learnt "a deal" from Jack: how to dig and weed in the garden, how to climb a tree or pole—which Jack always called a mast—and how to do all sorts of things on the sea shore, where they ran about barefooted.—He learnt to haul in ropes, to carry oars, and, when the tide was out, to go gathering mussels, small crabs, or

whatever else they could find in the pools of water on the wet sand.

Then his uncle would sometimes come down with the boys on to the beach and throw in sticks for his great dog to bring out. Jimmy soon learned to make friends with Wolf (that was the dog's name) and before long they were scarcely ever to be seen apart.

Summer had gone and the autumn days were far spent when Jimmy returned to his home in London.

He went back a very different boy to the pale fretful one he had been when he left it. Now he was strong, healthy, and comparatively brave; not afraid of Carlo or any other dog, and no longer peevish with his little brothers and sisters.

Carlo and he became friends, but Carlo never again licked the butter off the plate, as Jimmy was too knowing and too brave to let him.

I dare say you will like to know that Jimmy went again often to visit his good uncle and aunt. When he was old enough to be put to a trade, he chose that of a fisherman.

His uncle took him as an apprentice and he became, with his beloved cousin Jack, a brave fisher-boy.

THE ZOO.

ANTELOPES—THE SING-SING, REHBOK, PRONGHORN, AND BUSH BUCK, ETC.

BY THE LATE REV. J. G. WOOD.

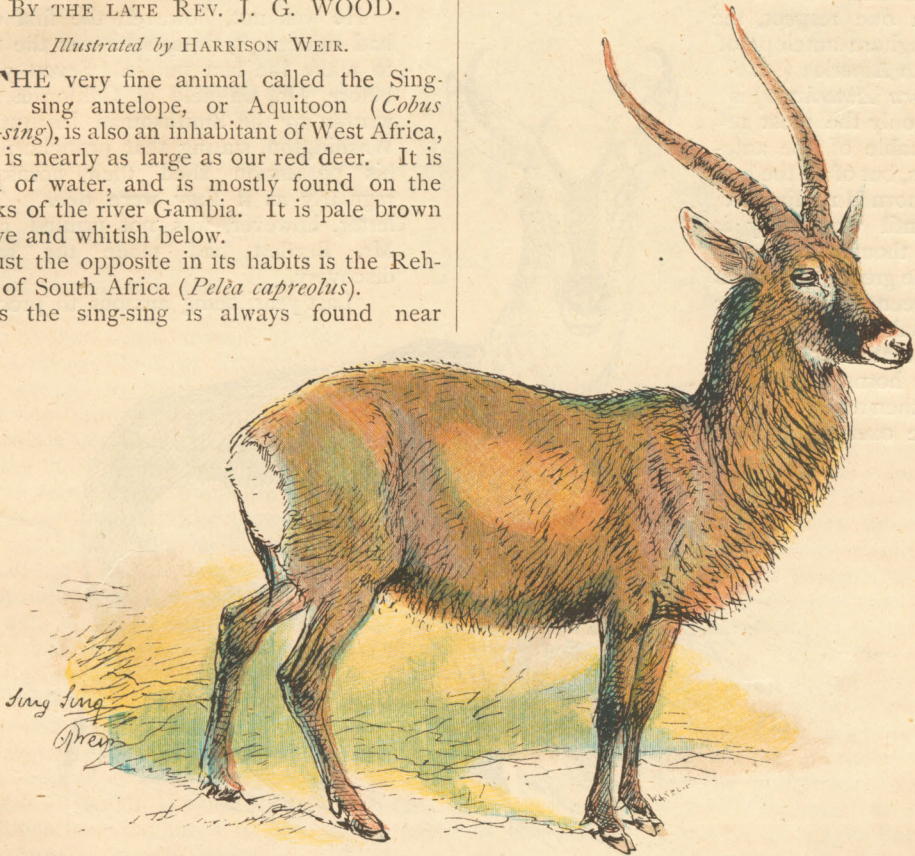
Illustrated by HARRISON WEIR.

THE very fine animal called the Sing-sing antelope, or Aquitooon (*Cobus sing-sing*), is also an inhabitant of West Africa, and is nearly as large as our red deer. It is fond of water, and is mostly found on the banks of the river Gambia. It is pale brown above and whitish below.

Just the opposite in its habits is the Rehbok of South Africa (*Pelæa capreolus*).

As the sing-sing is always found near

its gray-brown colour, which is exactly like that of the rocks and stones, it can hardly be seen at the distance of a few hundred yards. On account of its habits it is sometimes called the chamois of South Africa.



water, so is the reh-bok always found in dry and rocky places. Its activity is wonderful, and, according to Mr. Drummond, "they take bound after bound like an india-rubber ball in places that a cat would shudder at." Even the chamois is scarcely as active and sure-footed among rocks.

On level ground it is so swift that to run it down is not possible, and on account of

Try to see the Saiga (*Saiga tartarica*), one of the oddest-looking of the antelope tribe, and, indeed, being more like a sheep than an antelope. It is larger than the gazelles, being nearly as large as the common fallow deer. Only the male is horned.

It is more heavily made than the gazelles, and therefore, although it is very swift for a short distance, it soon becomes tired and

can be easily run down. The oddest part about the animal is the nose, which is very long, and the nostrils are so wide that when it is grazing it cannot see directly in front, and therefore walks backwards as it feeds. It inhabits Siberia.

In one respect, the Pronghorn antelope of North America (*Antilocapra Americana*) is not only the most remarkable of the antelopes, but of all the hollow-horned ruminants.

Until very lately it was thought that one of the great distinctions between the former animals and the deer, was that the deer shed their horns every year and then renewed them, while oxen, antelopes,

game, told me that for many years he had known that the pronghorn really does shed its horns, and in 1865 Mr. A. D. Bartlett, who has superintended the Gardens for many years, observed this very remarkable habit.

He was not, however, the first who had noticed it, though he was the first to make the fact public. Seven years before, Dr. Canfield of California had written to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, stating that pronghorns in his possession shed their horns as regularly as if they were deer. The letter, however, was not printed until Mr. Bartlett had made the same discovery.

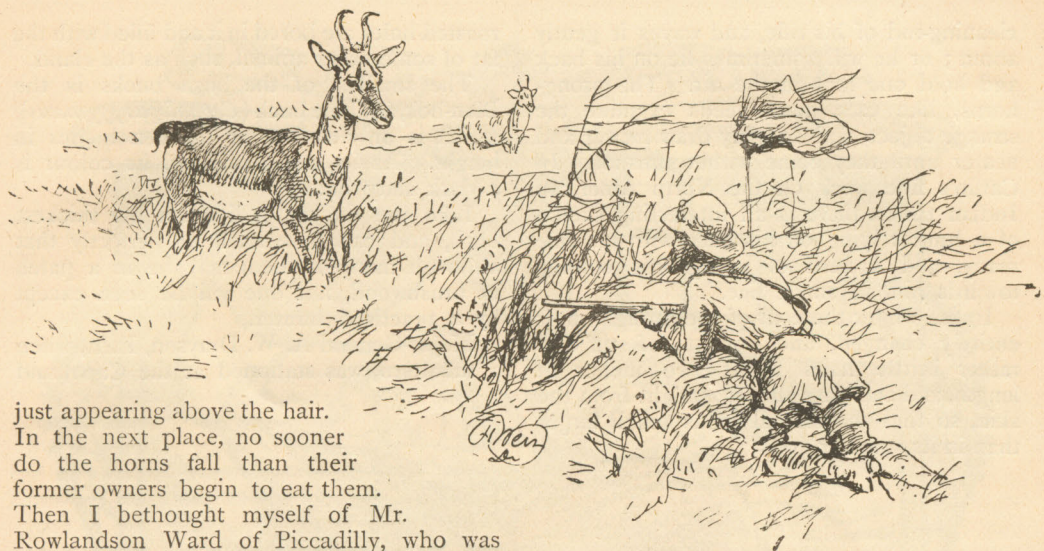
Last year, being anxious to procure



and their kin kept their horns through life.

For some years hunters had said that the pronghorn shed its horns like the deer, a statement which was not believed, and was thought to be only a hunter's tale. General Marcy, U. S. A., a well-known hunter of large

one of these horns, I asked Mr. Bartlett whether the Society had one that I could purchase. Not one could be procured for the following reasons. In the first place, only the males possess these singular horns, those of the female being so small that they scarcely deserve the name of horns, their tips only



just appearing above the hair.

In the next place, no sooner do the horns fall than their former owners begin to eat them.

Then I bethought myself of Mr.

Rowlandson Ward of Piccadilly, who was kind enough to hunt among his enormous collection until he found a horn, which he generously presented to me together with a number of other useful specimens.

As a rule all true horns are single, and do not have branches like those of the deer. But this horn, which is hooked much like that of the chamois, has a bold prong near the middle. At the base the horn is very flat, and so is the prong, but towards the tip it becomes rounded. For more than half its length from the base it is covered with short blunt spikes all directed forwards. Measured along the curve its length is fourteen inches, and it weighs between seven and eight ounces. The strangest part of its structure is that it is lined with a thick coat of whitish hair, so that it is quite unlike any other horn at present known.

Like other antelopes, the pronghorn is very wary, but can be approached by those who know its habits. In the first place, when chased, it does not escape, as it might easily do, by dashing ahead, but runs backwards and forwards across the path, keeping about a hundred yards ahead.

Not long ago a herd of pronghorns nearly

stopped a train on the Union Pacific railway. They preferred to run along the rails, and when the train approached they stopped and looked at it, so that many of them were killed. The driver, fearing that the train might be thrown from the rails, slackened the speed, but even then the pronghorns ran along the rails, stopping every now and then until the engine nearly touched them, and then running on afresh.

It might be thought that only a few animals could be on the line at once, especially as in America the rails are not enclosed by fences as in England, but are quite open on each side. But the pronghorn, instead of herding in masses, as is the case with most of the antelopes, travels in single line, as geese do, and therefore were occupying nearly a quarter of a mile of the railway. The train was in consequence nearly three-quarters of an hour late.

Sometimes when a hunter goes out alone and on foot, and sees a herd of pronghorns, he can make nearly sure of shooting at least one of them.

He lies down, ties a piece of rag to the

cleaning-rod of his rifle, and waves it gently about ; or he will sometimes lie on his back and hold one foot in the air. The pronghorns, like cats, must needs examine the strange object, and so they draw nearer and nearer until they come within gunshot. In Catlin's fine work on the North American Indian tribes, there is an interesting sketch of a hunter lying on his back with his rifle ready, and a herd of pronghorns coming towards him in single line.

In the winter the coat of the pronghorn is entirely changed, and consists of stiff and rather brittle hairs about two inches in length, and standing almost straight from the skin, so that the animal looks much larger than in its summer dress.

roasted holes are bored in it and filled with the fat of some other animal, such as the eland.

The smallest of the bush bucks is the Blau-bok, *i. e.* blue buck (*Cephalopus pygmaeus*), which is only a foot or thirteen inches in height. As its name imports, its colour is a dark slaty blue.

Like the duyker, it lives in the thickest bush, and can hide itself so perfectly that although many of them may be in a patch of brushwood, not one will be seen except by a practised hunter.

Major-General A. W. Drayson, R.A., when a subaltern, was stationed at the Cape, and



There is a small group of antelopes called Bush Bucks, all being little animals, and one of them having a body scarcely larger than that of a rabbit, although its legs are long and slender.

One of the best known is the Duyker-bok, or Diver-buck, so called from its habit of diving into the bush when alarmed.

It is about twenty-one inches high at the shoulder, and though so small, will often escape after a bullet has passed through its body. It is sure to die in a few minutes, but in that short time it will dive into the bush and creep to some distance before it dies. The skin is used for making whiplashes, and the flesh is so dry, that when it is

spent much time in hunting the many wild animals of South Africa. He states that even after long practice in the bush he could seldom see a blue buck, although the Kafir hunter who was with him could see the creatures easily enough.

These three bush bucks inhabit South Africa, but the Philantomba (*Cephalopus maxwelli*) lives in West Africa. The specimens in the Gardens either came from Sierra Leone or were born in the menagerie. Its colour is grayish brown.

(To be continued.)



Of what are they dreaming as they lie so quietly sleeping? All the day they have played together, even as they fell asleep they were whispering their thoughts to each other, and now, though they lie sleeping so close together, how far apart, I wonder, have their dreams divided them?

Perhaps Bess is walking through marble halls, a queen crowned with roses, while Jeannie fancies she is wandering far away on snowy moors, and the falling snow turns to rose-leaves on her head as it drops. Or maybe they have forgotten their roses altogether, those sweet wild roses which have been the delight of their day.

A week ago their big brother had gone away to sea, and just before he went he had brought his sisters a spray of wild roses. They had eagerly inquired where he found

them, but he in his hurry and excitement had given them no nearer direction than "in the fields."

This was not quite so vague as it sounds, for, alas, very few fields still remained where these children lived; the hedges were nearly all broken down, the trees dead or dying. Factories and long rows of half-finished cottages were covering and destroying all that remained of green and playground for the children. To them, however, never having seen the country, the smoky fields were full of delight; they played grand games on the heaps of rubbish, and sat making daisy chains under the wheels of a broken cart, as happily as luckier children far away in the beautiful fields.

This day their mother had been very busy, and the sun had shone warm and

bright, so she sent them to these fields with their lunch, and Baby May to mind, and they had wandered about looking for more roses, but they could not find any.

At last Jeannie grew tired of searching in vain, and wanted to give it up, but Bess would not.

"Let us pray to God about them," she whispered at last, looking very grave.

But Jeannie only laughed.

"Oh, but do, please do," Bess pleaded again, "and you will see we shall find our roses."

Well, as Bess wanted it so much, Jeannie said she would, and hand in hand they stumbled along with their eyes shut, praying together, "Please, please, dear God, take us to the rose bush;" and after a little time they opened their eyes, but there was no rose bush.

"We have not prayed hard enough," was all faithful Bess said, and shutting their eyes

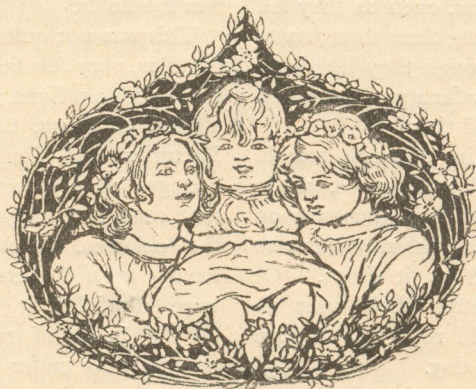
they went on still a little further; and now when they opened their eyes, they were standing on the edge of a little pit, and over the bottom and up the sides crept their beautiful wild roses, all covered with pink and white blossoms.

"I knew He would listen," Bess whispered softly, while Jeannie stood still, too much astonished to speak.

All the rest of the day they played round the pit, and made wreaths for themselves and Baby May; indeed they could think of nothing else.

"Is it not wonderful our finding them like that?" Jeannie said again and again, and Bess always answered, "I knew we should."

And just as they were going to sleep, Jeannie whispered to Bess, "We need not mind Bertie going to sea now. If God listened when we only asked for roses, He will be sure to listen if we pray to Him every night not to let the great cruel sea swallow our brother up."



LITTLE LADY MARY

BY Mrs. Isola Sitwell



"I AM sure it will be a most delightful party," said Lily to Gracie. "Do you know that little Lady Mary Morton is to be there?"

"Will that make it nice?" asked Gracie.

"You silly child!" returned Lily, who was a whole year older. "It will be nice to see her; you know she lives in such a beautiful house, and she must be just like a fairy queen."

Gracie was rather puzzled, but she did not say anything; and the same evening she and her cousin Lily went to the party. There were a great many girls and boys, but neither of the cousins had the least doubt as to which was Lady Mary. For there was one little girl who was very pretty, and most beautifully dressed. She had a pale pink silk frock trimmed with lace, and a string of pearls round her neck which were far more valuable than the children knew.

Lily attached herself at once to her, and scarcely left her all the evening. So certainly she should have found it a most delightful party.

But though fine feathers make fine birds, they do not always make pleasant ones. The smart little lady was very cross and disagreeable, and Lily had to pretend a great deal in order to persuade herself that she was happy.

As for Gracie, she looked at Lady Mary with admiration, then she found a little girl who was even shyer than herself, and the two played together. Others tried to tempt her companion away, but she always asked to stay where she was, and when she had to go home she threw her arms round Gracie's neck and kissed her.

Lily and Gracie were sent for too, and as the mistress of the house said good-night to them, she remarked—

"Is not little Lady Mary nice?"

"Yes," answered Lily, doubtfully. Then she added with more assurance, "Her pink frock is very pretty."

"Oh, no, my dear," was the reply, "that was not Lady Mary; it was the little girl in white who sat in the window with Gracie."

Fancy how astonished they were! On their way home, Lily, wishing to justify herself, remarked—

"Well, she did not look at all like a fairy queen."

But I think, and I hope you do, that if we could have fairy gifts, it would be better to ask for sweetness and gentleness than for pretty frocks and precious pearls.



"I PLAY too," said little Pat, sitting on his mother's knee, watching his bigger brothers and sisters at their games.

"Wait a little," said mother, with a kiss on the chubby little cheek; "this fox-and-goose game is too rough for you; we will ask them to play at oranges and lemons next, you could run round with them in that."

Soon the goose was caught and all her goslings. Pat slipped off his mother's knee and ran to Ethel, his eldest sister, who always took a motherly charge of him, whispering to her "Oranges, Efful."

So the little pet was put between his two most careful sisters, and trotted merrily round with the

rest till it came to his turn to come under the "chopper."

"Which will you have, orange or lemon?" whispered one of the executioners.

"Orange," was the pleased answer.

"Very well; stand still a minute on that side, and don't get in the way."

They had just got to "When will you pay me?" in the next round, when suddenly there was a loud cry from poor Pat.

"Precious boy—what's the matter?" said mother, rushing to him; "are you hurt? have they knocked you?"

"They—they asked me to have an orange," sobbed Pat, "and they—they nev—nev—never gave me one!"

"Poor little man," said Ethel, "he doesn't understand it's only a game; may I fetch him one, mother?"

"Yes, dear, by all means; and you all look hot and tired, bring the dishful, perhaps you would all like one before the next game."



A HOUSE TO LET.

BY MRS. MOLESWORTH.

CHAPTER XII.

DELIA'S DREAM.



BRIGHT, warm, lovely, summer! If spring, early spring even, in the country, had seemed fairyland to little Poppy, what words could she find for these blue and golden days, with their wealth of flowers, and butterflies, birds singing overhead, sleepy-eyed cows in the fields, everything, so at least it seemed to her, fresh and sweet and happy! For it was a very lovely summer that year; such a summer as we cannot expect, in England at least, *always*.

"And it's the twentieth of July at last, mother," said the little girl, as she stood at the cottage door early that morning, "and they're really coming this afternoon. Master Jack and Miss Bessie, as well as our own ladies. Isn't it funny that Miss Delia and Miss Constance and their Mamma should be our ladies, more than Miss Bessie and her Mamma? I'll never feel as if they *were* more ours, mother, I'll never love *no* ladies—I mean *any* ladies—mother, teacher's very particular about my talkin', do you know?"

"And a very good thing. If you're ever to be a nurse to ladies' children as you want to be, Poppy, ladies think a deal about nice talking. I'm too old now, to change myself but I shall be pleased for you to learn to say the words right."

"Yes—I told teacher so," said Poppy, but she spoke rather absently. "Mother," she went on,



Poppy was so happy,

there's just one thing I'd like, to make me perfectly happy, if only the ladies were going to drive in at *our* gate, and me to open it!"

"Nobody can have everything," said her mother, smiling. "But I tell you what—I do think we might both be standing near the big gates, to see them when they arrive. I know it'd be all right for me to lock up here just for once in a way."

Poppy flew to her mother and kissed her.

"Oh, yes, do let us," she said. "And p'raps Mr. Jemmit at the big lodge 'll let me help to open. He's rather stiff you know and the gates are very heavy. And, oh, mother, you'll be sure to have the cakes and all *beautiful* for to-morrow, won't you? 'Thursday at five o'clock,' Miss Bessie

wrote, 'we're all three coming to have tea with you and your mother, Poppy, in your new house.' " And Poppy was so happy that she was obliged to hop all round the kitchen and down the little garden path and back again, on one foot, to calm down her spirits a little.

"I wonder," she said presently when she was sitting at breakfast with her mother, "I wonder if Miss Delia will bring all her birds down to the country. And if she does I do hope the servants at number nine won't go and get a cat, mother?"

Poppy looked quite distressed.

"There's no fear of their getting a cat so long as the mice do no mischief," said her mother. "There was no talk of it that time I went up for two nights to help when the cook was ill. Indeed the servants were saying it was a wonderful clear house for mice."

"I'm so glad. I do so hope Flip and all of them are very good," said Poppy, as if speaking to herself. "I'll ask Miss Delia all the same," she added.

And so she did, the next afternoon, when, as had been settled, the two little girls and Jack, came to take tea with Mrs. Orchard and Poppy.

What a happy tea-party it was! How the little guests praised the cakes and the jam—and the cream—which Poppy's mother had bought at the farm for a *great* treat—how pretty the neat table looked, with a clean cloth and a beautiful posy of the roses that grew round the lodge windows, in the middle! and after tea, when everybody declared they really *couldn't* eat any more, how Poppy did enjoy showing the children all over—besides the big kitchen there was a back one where Mrs. Orchard did all the cooking, so that the front room was as neat as a new pin always, and up stairs there was a nice big bedroom and a cosy tiny one out of it, which was to be Poppy's own when she was a big girl and able to earn money to furnish it. Then the bit of garden was a great source of pride, and a tiny wired-in



WHAT A HAPPY TEA PARTY IT WAS!

poultry yard where they could keep a few hens and have fresh eggs to sell and sometimes to eat—all had to be shown and the little guests took as much interest in it as if it were their own.

"To think of it all coming of Jack's and my having colds and looking out of the nursery window to amuse ourselves! When I saw you at the lodge yesterday afternoon, Poppy, I said to Delia it was really like a story, didn't I, Delia? Do you ever make up stories now, Poppy, about the mice, you know? How they must miss you at number nine!"

Poppy looked a little troubled.

"Miss Bessie," she said, "I didn't make up about Flip and the others. I might, *p'raps* I might have dreamed some of it, but not all. I'd have told you, I would indeed if I had made it all up."

Bessie and Delia looked at each other and smiled.

"Tell her, Delia, do," said Bessie. "Listen, Poppy."

"It was about a dream I had," said Delia. "It was really very funny. It was the night before we left London. Everything was

ready, all the trunks were packed—even a mouse might have had the sense to see we were going away, so that part of it one can understand. Well, Poppy, I dreamt, or I didn't dream!—that a little dark mouse with a very long tail—

"A tail with a twist at the end?" interrupted Poppy.

"Yes—I think so at least—well, he came on to my bed, I saw him plain against the white counterpane, and stood there quite still for a minute. Then I heard a little *teeny* voice say, 'Are you asleep, Miss Delia?' I was rather startled at first, but I answered 'No,' for whether I was asleep or not, I thought I was awake, you see. 'I beg your pardon,' he went on, 'for disturbing you at this unseasonable hour—' he did use such grand words!—'but my excuse is that I may not have another opportunity. I see you are all going down to the country—we ourselves have often thought of taking a trip down there—we have cousins in the country, but for several reasons we have given up thoughts of it—and no doubt you will see our dear little friend, Poppy Orchard. May I ask you to give her my very kindest regards—Flip—Flip Brighteyes is my name—and tell her we are all well, wonderfully well and comfortable? We have kept to our part of the bargain, and you, Miss Delia, you and your kind Mamma have kept



He made a sort of twirl with his tail

to yours. No—no nameless one, has so far disturbed our peace of mind.'

"'You mean we haven't any—' I was just going to say 'cat' when I remembered that in Poppy's story—I mean Bessie told me that you musn't say it to them—so I changed. 'I certainly will never have any creature in the house who would hurt my birds, and so, Mr. Flip, I think

you are all pretty safe as long as you all behave so well.'

"He made a sort of twirl with his tail which I think was instead of a bow.

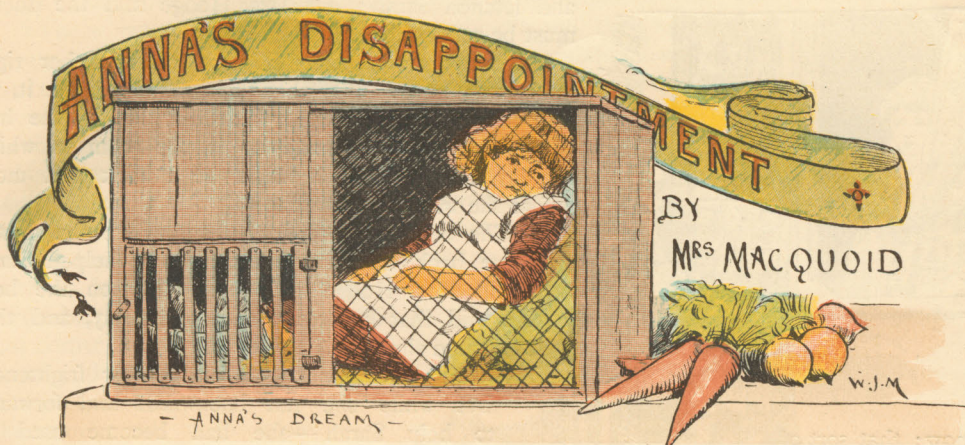
"'Thank you, thank you for the assurance,' he said. 'We are grateful, we are indeed. We never take anything we have no right to. Not even a grain of bird-seed, unless it is on the floor—we find crumbs enough and to spare, thanks to your Mamma's liberality. Tell dear Poppy of our well-being and—' I don't know what more he was going to say, for just then mother came in with a candle to say good-night and off he scampered. But any way dream or no dream, I have given you his message, Poppy."

Poppy had been listening with all her ears.

"I am glad of it," she said "for many a time I've thought of poor Flip. Some day maybe, Miss Delia, I might have to go to help at number nine—and then I'd see Flip again. I'm very pleased he hasn't forgotten me."



W.J.M.



IT was very cold, and the sky was dark and lowering. Anna stood at the window with a face very unlike the sky. She was only six, and her rosy cheeks and bright blue eyes were full of joy.

"Doves and rabbits," she said to herself, "goats too; and all the live creatures besides—I mean cows, and pigs, and fowls, and the rest. I don't believe anybody was ever so happy as I am going to be at Christmas."

Anna's father was at sea, so Anna Hodge and her mother were going to spend Christmas with Mrs. Hodge's father, who had a large farm in the country. They were to go on Christmas Eve, and that was three days after to-morrow.

At supper-time Sarah, Mrs. Hodge's little maid, brought in Anna's bread and milk.

"Sarah," the child said, "don't you wish you were going with us? You never saw doves and rabbits, did you? I wish you could come."

"No, thank you," the maid said; "I'd rather go home, and your mamma says I may."

"But, Sarah, the doves coo all day, and the rabbits are lop-eared:—I don't know what that is, but of course it makes them prettier."

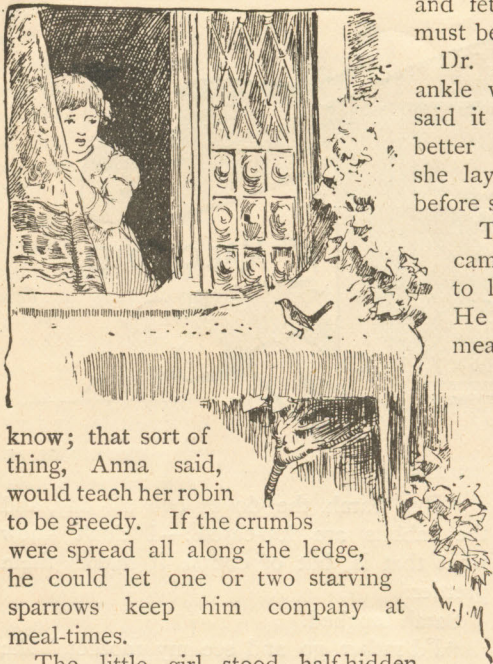
Sarah laughed.

"I'd rather go and see my mother," she said; "mother is mother, and she's more to me than a cartful of doves and rabbits."

Anna opened her eyes; in her heart she thought that Sarah was a goose.

She went to bed, and dreamed that she was shut up in a rabbit-hutch and had only raw cabbage to eat.

Next morning the weather was still colder, and the birds puffed out their feathers till they looked like balls; there was a keen north wind. After breakfast Anna collected the crumbs off the table-cloth into a plate, and then she opened the window. "Robin will be here directly," she said. The wind was so bitter that it made her screw up her little round face and blink her blue eyes, but she bravely scattered the crumbs along the window-ledge;—not putting them all in a heap, you



know; that sort of thing, Anna said, would teach her robin to be greedy. If the crumbs were spread all along the ledge, he could let one or two starving sparrows keep him company at meal-times.

The little girl stood half-hidden by the window-curtains, and all at once a black-eyed, brown-coated, orange-breasted bird hopped on to the ledge. He looked this way and that way, he perked up his head, he cocked his tail, he was as fussy and as important as a bird could be, and then down went his beak into the crumbs, down and down again. Anna's bright hair had been blown over her face by the cold wind, and she pushed it out of her eyes with her red, numbed fingers. The movement startled robin. He flew away. Then something startled Anna. She heard her mother cry out, and she ran into the next room. Mrs. Hodge lay on the floor. She had been standing on some steps while she dusted her husband's books, she had turned giddy, and she had fallen. Anna ran

and fetched Sarah; but Mrs. Hodge said the doctor must be sent for.

Dr. Parry came. Mrs. Hodge told him her right ankle was hurt; and when he had examined it, he said it was sprained. He told Mrs. Hodge she had better have a bed made up in the room in which she lay, and he said it might be a week and more before she was able to walk.

The bed was soon made, and when the doctor came back with some remedies, he helped Sarah to lift Mrs. Hodge and to lay her on the bed. He said that he would come next day, and that meantime she must lie very still.

At first Anna had felt terribly frightened, but while she ran backwards and forwards to help Sarah—she had become used to seeing her mother lie so very still. "It will be all right to-morrow," the child thought, "and next day we shall go to see grandfather."

In the night there was a heavy snowfall, and next morning, when Anna went in to see her mother, she had news to tell her.

"The bushes are twice as big as they were yesterday," she said, "and the great holly is bent almost down to the ground. If you were well, mother, we would make a snow man."

Mrs. Hodge smiled, but she looked sad. The child began to stroke her mother's hand with her soft little fingers.

"Does your ankle hurt much?" she said.

"It hurts; but it is not the pain that makes me sorry—I must write to your grandfather, we cannot go to him for Christmas."

Anna's eyes had grown round, and all at once tears fell over her rosy face.

"Oh!" she sobbed.

Just then the doctor came, and Anna slipped away. Then she began to cry in real earnest. Sarah had left the crumbs in a plate, but Anna could not think of the robin this morning.

Now and then, as she sat crying, a word or two came with her sobs:

"Those sweet doves! Oh dear, the rabbits! and they have such lovely lop-ears and I never saw a lop-eared rabbit; and the goats too! Christmas will be too miserable, and I wish there wasn't such a thing." She heard the doctor come out of her mother's room, but she would not go and speak to him. The robin came and chirped on the window-ledge, he even pecked at the glass—that was his way of knocking at the door—to remind his little hostess that he wanted his breakfast; but Anna's heart was too hard to let her feel for anything but her own disappointment. She sat still in her corner behind one of the curtains.

At mid-day, Sarah came in. She looked surprised when she saw the crumbs still in the plate, but as she wanted to wash it, she opened the window and threw the crumbs out on the ledge.

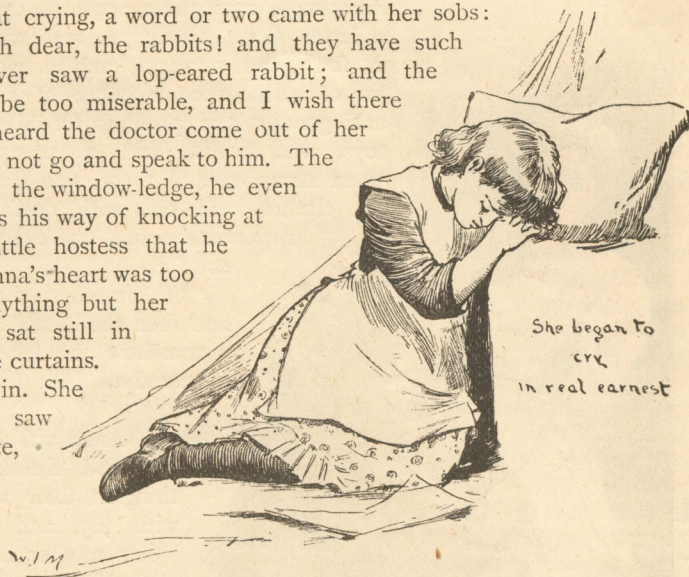
This roused Anna.

"You need not do it," she said crossly.

"What are you in the mumps about?" Sarah said. Then she saw that Anna had been crying.

"Poorchild!" she said kindly: "but you are good to keep away. The doctor said your mamma was to be kept very quiet so that she might go to sleep; she ain't so well this morning."

Anna looked frightened, but she did not answer. She was horribly ashamed, and when Sarah went away, she felt as if she wanted to hide out of the sight of every one. Oh what a selfish, unfeeling little girl she had been; it seemed to her that if her mother knew what she had been doing and thinking while she lay suffering on her bed, she could never love her again. Presently, when Sarah took up some luncheon, Anna crept in after, and to her joy her mother was awake.



As her mother smiled at her and stretched out her hand, Anna smiled too, and peace came to her little struggling soul. Sitting there close by her dear mother, she felt safe from the hard, rebellious thoughts that had made her so wretched.

Anna was only six, but she could read well, and she felt pleased when her mother asked her to read to her.

Just before Anna went to bed, her mother said to her:—

"We will not be selfish, darling; we will let Sarah go to her mother, and you and I will keep Christmas by ourselves. I will get old Mrs. Jones to come in and help; she will be glad of a good dinner on Christmas Day."

By the afternoon of Christmas Eve, Mrs. Hodge was much better, and while she sat listening to Anna's reading, a knock came at the cottage door. Sarah came in carrying a

hamper; she cut the strings and opened it, and there was inside a letter from grandpapa, and such a lot of things besides. A fowl, and sausages, and a pie, a plum pudding, and a jar of mince-meat, a bottle of cream, and all sorts of cake and goodies and presents for Mrs. Hodge, and Anna also, toys, and books, and a pretty chest of drawers; and when Anna opened these, two drawers were filled with doll's clothes; and one with doll's trinkets, and another with brushes and combs and everything necessary for a doll's comfort.

"Oh, mother, how lovely!" Anna cried; and then she kissed and hugged her mother, for somehow she felt that she had not quite deserved all these good things.

Anna waked early on Christmas morning and listened to the bells. Something in their sound made her heart thrill with joy, and when she went in to see her mother and to give her a pen-wiper she had made for her, she quite forgot to think Christmas was miserable.

Her mother had got such a surprise for her,—a photograph of her father, in a little frame which would stand upright.

Then Sarah took her to church, and Anna had never listened to anything so beautiful, she thought, as the Christmas hymns.

"Good-will towards men!" the little girl said to herself while she and her mother ate the Christmas dinner which grandfather had provided; "there are no men here to be good to, what can I do?"

"Mother," she said after dinner, "I'm going to have a tea-party—at least, I must have two: first, one for robin,

and then one for the kitten. It seems to me they ought to have a happy Christmas; and if I'd gone to grandfather's, there would have been nobody to care for them."



The Christmas.

hamper

THE ZOO.

ANTELOPES—GRYS-BOK, FOUR-HORNED, LECAMA, BLESS-BOK, BONTE-BOK, GNU, CHAMOIS.

BY THE LATE REV. J. G. WOOD.

Illustrated by HARRISON WEIR.

ANOTHER beautiful little antelope is the Grysbok (*Neotragus melanotis*), also a native of South Africa.

The name signifies gray-buck, and is given to the animal because the mixed white and chestnut hairs of the body give it a grayish appearance at a little distance. It is only



about nineteen or twenty inches high at the shoulder. It loves the mountains if they be well covered with brushwood, but now and then comes down upon the plains, and is then very wary, not being able to hide itself in the bush.

The word *melanotis* signifies black ears, and is given to the animal because the ears, which are fully four inches long, are black at

their tips. Take notice of the very small and sharp hoofs and the tiny tail, which is so small that at a little distance it can scarcely be seen.

Look out for the Four-horned antelope of India (*Tetracerus quadricornis*), one of the most remarkable of the antelopes, having two distinct sets of horns, one very small pair just above the eyes, and a larger pair in the usual place. It prefers low coverts on rising grounds, and is mostly found alone, or at the most in pairs. It seldom ventures into the open country, but hides itself in the long grass, springing up under the hunter's feet when he does not expect it.

Now we come to some very fine antelopes, which on account of their large size and peculiar heads are all called by a name which signifies elk-headed.

The first of them is the Hartebeest or Lecama—the latter name being formed from one of its native names, Kama (*Alcephalus caäma*).

It is impossible to mistake the horns of this animal, as they are first bent backwards for a little way, then forwards, and then backwards so as to form a bold hook.

It lives in little herds consisting of ten or eleven females and one male, all the young males being turned out of

the family as soon as they are strong enough to shift for themselves. When full grown it is about five feet high at the shoulders. It is found in most parts of South Africa, and is mostly seen on the high grounds, although it will, when pressed by want of food, descend into the lower plains.

It is not very swift, and may be run down by a hunter mounted on a good horse. But

although timid, and doing its best to escape, it will, if closely pressed, suddenly stop, wheel round, drop on its knees, and charge fiercely with its horns. It is grayish brown in colour, with a large triangular patch upon the hind-quarters, and a few black patches and stripes upon the head and body.

Near it will be seen the Bless-bok (*Alcephalus albifrons*). This very handsome animal is likewise a native of South Africa, and is remarkable for the colour of its fur, which is brown in some light and violet in others, so that in the sunshine it looks like "shot" silk. The name of bless-bok is given to it in consequence of the "blaze" or white patch upon the front of the face.

Its flesh is not eaten except by necessity, for the animal feeds upon certain strong-smelling herbs of its native plains, and the whole of the flesh is so perfumed that white hunters do not eat it. Even the skin and hoofs are perfumed in a similar manner. It is one of those antelopes which, like the gnus (which we will presently visit), the spring-boks, ostriches, and giraffes, are fond of assembling in vast herds upon the plains.

When alarmed, it makes off at its best pace, putting its nose almost to the ground, and always running directly against the wind. When one herd takes alarm all the others follow its example, so that as far as the eye can see the plain is covered with bless-boks all streaming in the same direction.

Near the bless-bok is the Bonte-bok (*Alcephalus pygargus*), sometimes called the Nunni. Its fur has much of the same purple colour as that of the bless-bok, but the front of the legs is white, and there is also a white

blaze upon the face and a large white patch upon the hind-quarters. These bold colours have gained for it the name of Pied antelope or White-faced antelope. As is usual among animals, the colours of the female are not so bright as those of the male.

The bonte-bok lives in little herds of six or seven in number.

The Tora and Bubaline antelope are both found in Northern Africa, and both belong



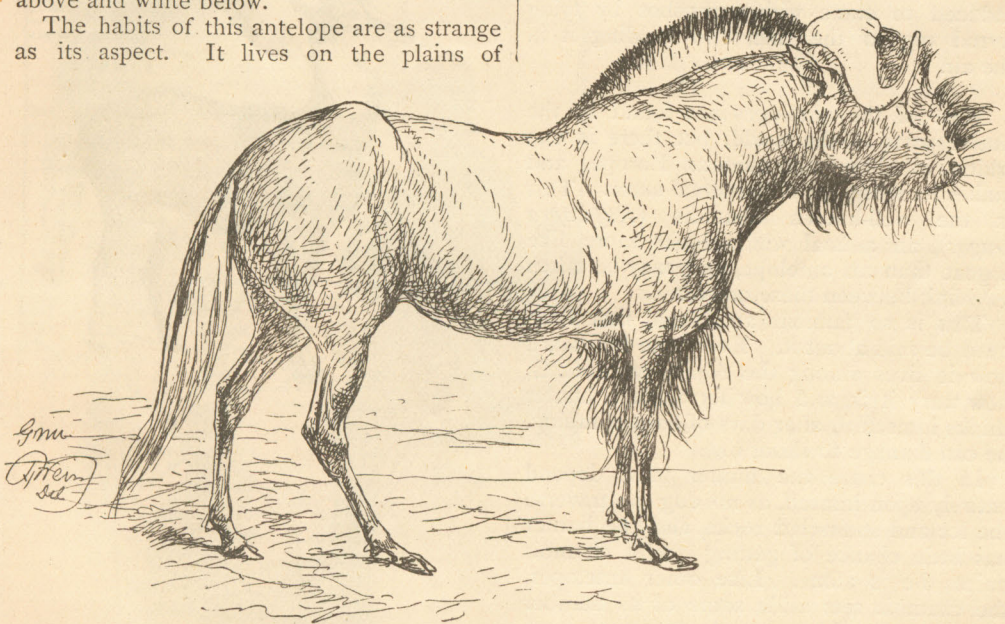
to the same group as the hartebeest, bless-bok, and bonte-bok.

Now we come to those strange animals which are best known by the name of Gnu, and which the Dutch colonists of the Cape call by the name of Wildebeest.

The commonest of them is the White-tailed Gnu (*Catoblepas gnu*). This animal is a great favourite in travelling wild beast shows, where it is always called the horned horse. The horns of the gnu almost meet on the forehead, and then turn downwards as far as the middle of the face, when they turn upwards so as to form a hook. On the nose there is a tuft of black hair, and a long black "beard" runs from the chin along the front of the throat. The long tail is black above and white below.

The habits of this antelope are as strange as its aspect. It lives on the plains of

any other sound that I have heard. I have often been in Sangers' menagerie when all the lions were roaring together and making the building tremble with their voices. This lion concert always had a great effect on a gnu which was kept in the same building, causing it to prance about in its cage, and every few seconds to utter barks which pierced through the roars of six lions. At each bark the head is jerked high in the air.



South Africa and bands together in great herds, mixed, as has already been mentioned, with other antelopes, zebras, ostriches, and giraffes.

Its popular name is given to it on account of its singular voice, which some travellers have thought to resemble the roar of the lion. As it is very loud, and the gnus assemble in great numbers, it is possible that at a distance their voices may sound like the roar of the lion. But the cry of the gnu is a short sharp bark, quite unlike

Not only when at liberty in its own country, but when kept in a cage, it every now and then goes through a whole series of antics. It kicks so high that it seems to be standing on its fore-legs, then it rears until it is upright on its hind-feet, then it spins round and springs with all its feet off the ground, while all the time its tail is whirled about in the most absurd fashion. The hunters think that the gnu has a worm in its brain which forces it to dance about in this style, and that when it barks and snorts

it is trying to drive the worm out of its nostrils.

On one occasion Gordon Cumming saw a gnu which had contrived to hitch one of its fore-legs over the horn of the same side, and which, not being able to release its leg, was easily caught. He thought that it might have met with this accident while fighting, but I think that it was quite as likely to have caught its leg on its horn while dancing about in the manner which I have described.

Like the pronghorn, the gnu can be induced to come within gunshot by tying a red rag to the rifle, and holding it in the air.

Most of the antelopes are found in the hotter parts of the world, but there is one which inhabits mountainous Europe, and makes its home amid perpetual snow. This is the well-known chamois (*Rupicapra tragus*), an animal which looks more like a goat than an antelope, and may be taken as a link between these creatures.

This is so familiar an animal that little need be said about it. Every one has heard how it lives among the Alpine mountains, how wary it is, and how fortunate a hunter thinks himself if, after days of hard climbing, he can manage to shoot one.

In this chase the hunter must depend entirely upon himself, as no dog can traverse the ice and snow-clad rocks, and the hunter has little chance of getting near a chamois unless he is alone. Like other antelopes, the chamois sets aside some of its number to climb to the highest peaks for the purpose of watching for enemies, and he must indeed be a clever hunter who deceives the eyes of these sentinels.

The worst foe which it has to fear is the great lammergeyer, or bearded vulture, which will sometimes swoop on it from behind, while it is perched upon some lofty peak, knock it into the valley beneath, killing it by the fall, and then devouring the animal at its ease.



(To be continued.)

LITTLE SANTA CLAUS.

BY MRS. ISLA SITWELL.

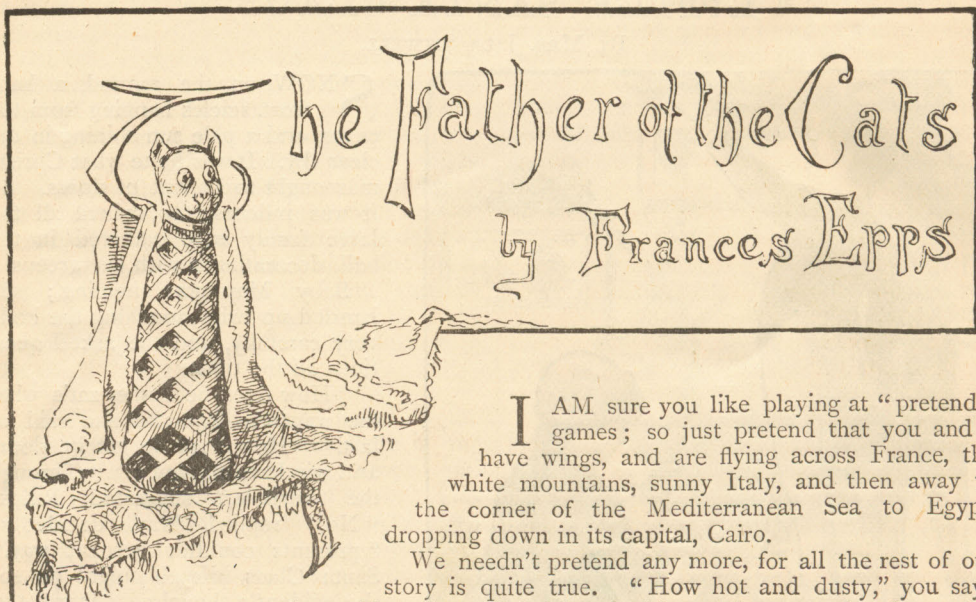


SNOW on the ground, a hard frost, icicles hanging from the eaves, and a pale sun shining in the clear sky. It was quite what Christmas ought to be out of doors. So it was indoors, too, where all the large family were gathered in the hall, decorating it with evergreens.

Baby May was helping; she handed up twigs, touching the holly very carefully, and she asked questions all the time.

"How does he come, zat's what me wants to know?" she said at last. "How does he get in, doors and windows all shut?" "Through the keyhole," suggested Ralph. "No," replied May, decidedly; "presents couldn't get zat way." Santa Claus himself might do so, she evidently thought. "Down the chimney," said another brother. "Zey'd be all over soot," returned May. "Why do you want to know?" asked her big sister Alice. "You get the things, is not that enough for you, little woman?" May hung her head, and put her finger in her mouth. "No," she said at last, "'cos me wants to be Santa Claus me's own self." "And bring yourself more presents," said Charlie. "Oh, May! I didn't think you were so greedy." "No, no!" protested May; "me would like to be Santa Claus for zose poor little chil'ens me saw yesterday. You know, Alice. Zey so cold, and got no warm jackets, and you say you 'fraid Santa Claus no bring zem beauty doll like he bring me." Charlie whistled. "She's a little brick," whispered Ralph. "Where would you get the things for them,

darling?" asked Alice. "Would Santa Claus be angry if me took zem some of me's own?" returned May. "We must talk to mother about it," said Alice, and they went off to do so at once. May was happy indeed when she saw all her lovely presents the next morning. But she was happier still when she was lifted out of the carriage on the way to church, that she might put a basketful of all sorts of good things at the cottage door. She ran back with her face glowing with pleasure. "Make haste! make haste!" she said. "Zey mustn't see Santa Claus." The poor little children and their mother could easily guess where the basket had come from, but they did not guess who had been the bearer, and May never told.



I AM sure you like playing at "pretend" games; so just pretend that you and I have wings, and are flying across France, the white mountains, sunny Italy, and then away to the corner of the Mediterranean Sea to Egypt, dropping down in its capital, Cairo.

We needn't pretend any more, for all the rest of our story is quite true. "How hot and dusty," you say;

"what a blue sky and bright sunshine; what crowds of people;

and how they shout and scream and throw themselves about; what queer dresses, too! Some of the people wear veils over their faces. And why are so many looking eagerly out of the windows? are they watching for their Lord Mayor's Show?"

These people are all looking out for a religious procession just starting from Cairo to go a long way across the desert to visit the birth-place and tomb of a man they consider a great prophet, called Mahomet. Here it comes at last! What a deafening noise of bands, drums, fifes, trumpets. See the soldiers, some on foot, some on horseback. Those strange, excited-looking men, with turbans and flowing garments, are dervishes; look at their funny antics. That strange-looking sort of couch, with curtains round it, swinging between two camels, is the litter of some great man. What a number of camels, too! some with tents and food packed on their backs, some carrying a sort of room, whence peep out little baby faces, with mothers all veiled except their eyes. There are asses and horses too; and like the camels, they are all decked with little flags and green boughs.

At last comes the Mah'mal, an empty litter made of embroidered coloured cloth, which has been this pilgrimage across the desert many times, and is considered so sacred that the people bow down before it, and others try to touch it with their handkerchiefs, thinking that will do them some good!

Have you ever seen so many beggars, and such dreadful-looking ones, too? I am afraid you must be quite tired with seeing such crowds, and hearing so much noise. But suddenly you clap your hands, "Oh! what a funny old man; and what has he got on his camel?"

That is the "Father of the Cats," bringing up the rear of the procession. What a strange-looking, half-dressed old man he is, carrying on his camel a large family of pussy-cats.

The people of Egypt used in former times to think cats sacred animals, honoured them in every way, and took even more care of them than they did of their own babies. When they died they made mummies of them, and buried them in tombs; so, as a sort of remembrance of the feeling their forefathers had for cats, a party of these animals go every year with the procession of pilgrims, to the tomb of the prophet Mahomet!

Poor pussies! Just fancy how they would mew when taken from their comfortable homes and put into these bags to jolt about on the camel's back. You have been on one of the camels in the Zoo, so you know how very jolty it is. They will have to journey for thirty-seven days across the hot sandy desert, put up with close quarters, much crushing and cramming when they reach Mecca and Medina. They will not enjoy the splendid festive ceremonies there a bit; nor the honour and glory of having been pilgrims, which their fellow-travellers prize so much; and then there's the long journey home again! But the Father of the Cats looks very kind, and as if he would be sure to get them nice food, and take all the care he can of them.

Then, at last, when they do get back from their pilgrimage, the pussies, at least, will have no share in the sorrow that many poor hearts will feel when the procession comes back to Cairo. There will be women come out to meet their pilgrim husbands, with food and nice clean garments, only to learn they have died by the way; there will be more than one pilgrim father looking out eagerly for a wife and dancing brown baby to meet him, and will see her alone, with downcast eyes and empty arms.

No, our four-footed purring friends will feel none of this aching sorrow as they snooze once more in their accustomed corners, although the bones of several of their companions may be bleaching in the burning desert, and the fine families of kittens left behind have totally forgotten their travelled parents!

Now for our wings to fly home again, chatting as we go of the wonderful things we have seen, and longing to know more of the strange people who are so earnest in doing what they think right and dutiful.





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The number of children under the care of the Committee on the June 30, 1889, was as follows :—

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In other Church Homes and Institutions, payments being made by the Committee for the support of the children 138 boys, 135 girls—273

Boarded out with Communicants of the Church of England in the country under proper supervision 214 boys, 172 girls—386

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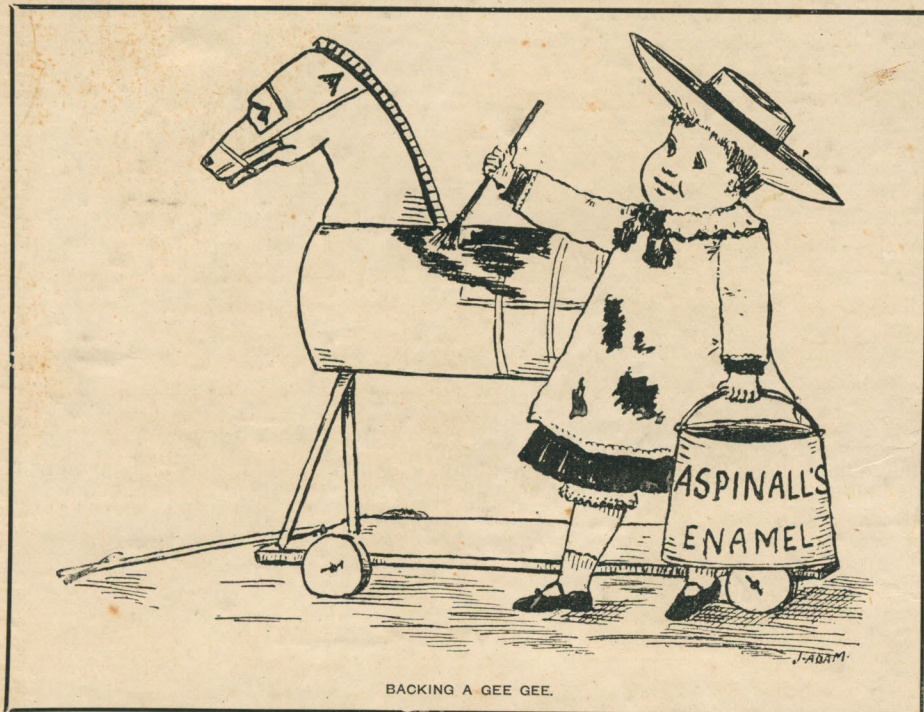
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